









# Home News

## Programme to encourage women's electoral participation

AMMAN (J.T.) — A three-day training programme to encourage women to participate in local elections was initiated at Princess Basma Women's Resources Centre Tuesday, according to a Queen Alia Fund (QAF) for Social Development statement.

The programme was jointly organised by the centre and the Jordanian National Forum for women in cooperation with the Canadian Embassy in Amman.

Canadian Ambassador to Jordan Michael Malloy stated in the opening ceremony, attended by Centre Director Farah Daghistani, that Jordan has made great steps towards political maturity and enhancing its democratic process through parliamentary and local elections.

He said the Canadian government supports all activities aimed to promote women's role in society as women, he maintained, constitute the most effective factor for social change, the statement said.

Mr. Malloy described Jordan as most suc-

cessful in dealing with the changes taking place in the international arena and as one of the most successful countries in implementing Beijing's Platform of Action concerning women.

He expressed optimism for further Canadian-Jordanian cooperation in women-related issues.

Secretary General of the National Forum for Women Rand Hindawi said in her speech that women must participate in elections and practise their right to vote.

A total of 18 women, who plan to run for municipal by-elections scheduled for next month, are participating in the programme.

The programme involves lectures and practical exercises in various issues related to elections such as election campaigning and management, upgrading leadership and communication skills, identification of local community needs.

The participants will also be educated regarding laws governing municipal and election activities, the statement concluded.

## Danish institute signs memorandum with RSS

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Danish Technology Institute of Denmark (DTI) and the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) yesterday signed a memorandum to establish a partnership to promote scientific and technological cooperation, according to an RSS statement.

The agreement provides for mutual recognition of certification and testing, conducting joint venture projects in the Middle East, cooperation in joint research projects, in various fields of technology within the framework of the European Union (EU) scope of funding, and human resource development and technical training.

The memorandum also provides for software development for industrial application, and cooperation and exchange of

expertise in the field of building technology, the statement said.

Under the terms of the memorandum, DTI will also provide technical support and training to RSS staff deemed necessary for further cooperation.

For its part, RSS will conduct all studies and necessary testing for DTI in the Middle East region and both institutions will institute newly graduated student exchanges and provide them with necessary job training.

The DTI is an independent institute aiming at addressing industrial and societal needs through the development and dissemination of technological innovations, the statement said.

## Jordanian delegation leaves for Paris

AMMAN (Petra) — A senior level Jordanian delegation headed by Planning Minister Rima Khalaf leaves today for Paris to participate in two days of meetings of the Joint Jordanian-French Committee, due to convene in Paris on Jan. 30.

The committee will discuss scopes of bilateral cooperation in cultural, scientific, technical, electronic media, water and agriculture, tourism, legal and administrative sciences and health fields.

Auxiliary to the meeting, Dr. Khalaf is slated to hold talks with French officials on

means of further developing economic relations.

The Jordanian delegation includes Jordanian Ambassador to Paris Sharif Fawwaz Sharaf, Ministry of Finance Secretary General Suleiman Hafedh, Director General of the Antiquities Department Ghazi Bisbeh, Ministry of Planning Assistant Secretary General for International Cooperation Salem Ghawi, Ministry of Planning Bilateral Exchange Department Director Mustafa Saleh and the Jordanian cultural attaché to the embassy in Paris.

## Local firm wins tender for construction of Islamic funeral home

AMMAN (Petra) — The General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS) Monday offered a tender to a local company for the construction of an Islamic funeral home.

This is slated to be constructed on a plot of land in the Mahatta area on the outskirts of Amman, donated by Amman municipality.

GUVS President Abdullah Khatib signed the JD 210,000 contract with the company's director.

The company will also construct a refrigerated area for storage at an additional cost of JD 40,000. It also will include facilities for washing the dead in accordance with Islamic law.

The project has been directed to alleviate

the suffering of bereaved families.

The home will arrange, upon request, for the retrieval of necessary certificates from the Ministry of Health in the Amman Municipality as well as the Civil Registration Department.

The centre will include reception and waiting halls and a small prayer area, so that prayer can be performed concurrently, instead of taking the body to a mosque elsewhere.

GUVS is currently involved in drafting regulations governing the home's operation.

The funeral home will charge those who are financially secure a nominal cost for services rendered.

## The linguistic origins of Ramadan and other interpretations

By Nadia Mukhlis  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Prophet Muhammad was quoted as saying: "Thank God for the month of Sha'ban has ended and the month of Ramadan has commenced."

Ramadan is the holy month for all Muslims in which they fast from dawn till sunset following the dictates of the Koran. According to the holy book, God has excused the sick and travellers providing they compensate for the days in which they broke their fast within the year before the next Ramadan.

However, for those who have deliberately indulged during the month, reparations are augmented such as fasting continuously for 60 days, feeding 60 needy people or freeing slaves. The last being, according to the Koran, a method used

to put a final end to slavery.

Certain ethics are related to Ramadan, such as goodwill towards one's fellows, strengthening relations between family and strangers, being merciful, amending for past errors, practising courtesy, these are the values Muslims are instructed to cultivate in themselves and spread to the greater society.

One month, tradition says, in an environment of purity, faith and honesty can help strengthen a person and Muslims should seize the opportunity to prevent wrongdoing as the Prophet Muhammad says "God welcomes repentance and forgiveness."

The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs holds special lectures during the month, introducing Ramadan in all of its different aspects and providing a venue for donors who desire to succour those less

fortunate than they, as Ramadan is the month of mercy and goodwill, Rafiq El Khatib director of Al Haram Al Sharif told the Jordan Times.

Ramadan was a holy month even before Islam — it was a month in which fighting was prohibited and people lived in peaceful surroundings and different meanings have been allocated to the word; in Arameic the word "ramad" means "intense heat" as in ancient times Ramadan was observed in hot summers.

Astrologers believe that "ramad" is the heat inside of every fasting person, due to lack of liquids, and "another opinion is that ramad" is the heat or fire which burns the sins out of the soul by way of good deeds.

The Prophet Muhammad maintained that "He who fasts the month of Ramadan in true belief,

## UNRWA workers to hold extraordinary session

By Ghaila Alul  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Workers from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) five areas of operation will hold an extraordinary meeting here in February in an attempt to study the administrative policy of the agency and take necessary measures to urge UNRWA to meet their demands, staff sources told the Jordan Times Tuesday.

The sources said UNRWA employees held a similar meeting for the agency workers two months ago and prepared an agenda for the meeting, listing their demands.

However, they added, the agency failed to respond and so the workers cancelled the meeting.

"The employees in the agency's five areas of operation previously issued demands which include better health, education and social services, salary increases to cope with the rising cost of living and end-of-service compensations compatible with those offered by the Jordanian government, a source said.

The administration is dis- regarding our demands. And our situation is now worse than before," one source said.

He added that the agency employees sent a cable to UNRWA Secretary General Peter Hansen to invite him to attend the meeting in February which will represent about 20,000 UNRWA employees.

"Mr. Hansen did not

respond to our call and it appears that this administration is even worse than the previous one," he said.

Had Mr. Hansen been interested in the meeting, he would have met with the Jordanian authorities and representatives of Palestinian refugees during his last visit to the Kingdom, the source said.

He added that UNRWA employees are entitled to retirement only after 30 years of service and that they demanded eligibility for this benefit after 25 years of service.

The source said if the agency fails to heed their demands, employees in the five areas of operation will take serious measures against UNRWA.

"It seems the administration in UNRWA does not appreciate dialogue and that they will not respond to our call unless we stage a general strike in all areas of UNRWA operations," he asserted, adding that a "general strike will have a stronger impact on the agency's work."

The agency operates in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Gaza and the West Bank. UNRWA's operations in Jordan are the largest as it hosts the largest number of refugees.

UNRWA employs 20,000 people of whom the majority are Palestinian refugees who benefit from the agency's health, education and social services.

## Editor-in-chief of tabloid arrested at home

By Rana Hussein  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The editor-in-chief of the weekly satirical *Abed Rabbo* has been ordered detained by the Amman prosecutor on charges of slandering a deputy and a minister, official sources said.

Efforts to set Yousef Gheishan free on bail failed Monday as the court did not respond to his attorney's request.

"We submitted a request to free my client on bail but the court did not respond as its work day was over," Defence Lawyer Habis Shboul said.

Mr. Gheishan was arrested in his Madaba home at 11:30 p.m. Monday night and is charged by Amman Prosecutor Jamal Zou'bi of slandering and tarnishing another person's image and dignity.

On Thursday, Responsible Editor Omar Nadi was detained for three days on the same charges.

A lawsuit was filed against the editors of the newspaper after it published a caricature and a news item in two separate issues describing Islamist Deputy Ibrahim Zeid Kilani as a "hypocrite" and accusing Minister of Public Works Abdul Hadi Majali of stealing cars.

Mr. Zou'bi told the Jordan Times that his decision to arrest Mr. Gheishan came after questioning Mr. Nadi, who was arrested on the same charges.

"During questioning, Mr. Nadi informed me that he had been on vacation and he

submitted evidence that he had requested a sick leave, proving that he was not the editor when one of the slanderous items was published," Mr. Zou'bi said.

On Tuesday, Mr. Zou'bi told the Jordan Times that when he questioned Mr. Gheishan, the latter pleaded not guilty to the charges, and claimed that he was not the editor-in-chief of the newspaper.

"He informed me that he was not the editor-in-chief but merely a reporter and that his title position was 'lead pirate,'" Mr. Zou'bi said.

The prosecutor further stated that he is planning to call on Press and Publication Department Director Mohammad Amin and other journalists working for the newspaper to determine who was the editor-in-chief at the time the slanderous material was published.

In a previous interview with the Jordan Times, Mr. Gheishan charged that Deputy Kilani and Mr. Majali "are in sensitive positions due to upcoming elections and that is why they decided to file a lawsuit against Mr. Nadi."

He further stated in the interview: "If these news or caricature items had been published six months earlier none of the two would have been interested in filing a lawsuit against us."

On Monday, the Jordan Press Association (JPA) council issued a statement expressing its dismay over the contents of some weekly newspapers, which, the asso-

ciation said, were tarnishing culture, values and tradition.

The association maintained that these newspapers were abusing press freedoms and further warned that journalists who do not abide by press ethics would be punished and possibly expelled from the association.

Several deputies in a parliament session last week expressed their dismay and disapproval over articles being published in some weekly tabloids, which they called "indecent" and "unethical" in their approach.

They described the House as extremely offended by such publications.

In response to their complaints, Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti said the government would take action to terminate "indecent, obscene and unacceptable" articles in local publications.

In July of last year, a wave of arrests and questioning of journalists ensued following a statement, issued by Parliament, urging authorities and the media to take measures to put an end to writings which harm national unity and Arab and Islamic values.

His Majesty the King responded by sending a message to Parliament reprimanding some writers who attempt to harm national unity and urging newspapers to live up to the aspirations of the Jordanian people in propagating the values and principles of the Kingdom.

## Writer laments lack of funding, differs with ministry over book classification

By Tanya Hajjoui  
and Tarek Attalla  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordanian writer Mousa Barhoumah expressed outrage over a recent decision by the Ministry of Culture not to sponsor his book based in its supposed "immoral" content.

The book in question, entitled "My Book" was approved by the censorial section of the Press and Publications Department on Aug. 6 of last year.

According to Mr. Barhoumah, he has been waiting since that time for the Ministry of Culture to sponsor him as it is their policy to cover 50 per cent of publishing costs for Jordanian authors.

Mr. Barhoumah received a letter on Jan. 16 from Minister of

Culture Ahmed Qudah refusing sponsorship as his book was judged to be immoral by the ministry's reviewing committee, Mr. Barhoumah told the Jordan Times.

"The committee found my book to have sexual connotations and felt that my prose style emulated that of the Koran, which is blasphemous," he explained.

"My Book" is a collection of prose written over a period of six years, and filled with "love poetry and descriptions of women which the committee found offensive," Mr. Barhoumah said.

"I was shocked by the ministry's decision because if such standards are used to judge literary work, then they would eradicate 90 per cent of great Arabic literature," he added.

Mr. Barhoumah cited

several examples of literature that he felt would be subject to such censorship, such as Umu Al-Qais, Omar Ben Abu Rabia, Najib Mahfouz, and Nizar Qabanni.

"Are we going to remove their works because of morality and offence to religion?" he asked.

Mr. Qudah told the Jordan Times Tuesday that the reviewing committee had "found Mr. Barhoumah's book unsuitable for society."

"If this were true, then why were there no complaints when my prose was published in Al Rai and Al Dustour this past year?" Mr. Barhoumah asked.

Mr. Qudah further stated that it was not the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture to sponsor such a book when funds were limited with a high number of

writers seeking sponsorship.

"Why should we publish a book under our name that is not appropriate to our culture?" he asked.

The reviewing committee is comprised of professors from different universities and known writers, although "we do not like to name the members," Mr. Qudah stated.

"Our objective is to encourage creativity among our writers and people," he added.

However, Mr. Barhoumah disagreed. "The Ministry of Culture indulges in dictatorship against the mind and creativity," he said.

He opined that it would be futile to appeal the decision, stating "When I write about the woman I love, I do not want to debate it with someone who will tell

me to write it differently — that would limit me."

When this reporter asked Mr. Qudah about the publication of Mr. Barhoumah's prose in newspapers in the past, he replied "I stand by our decision. Mr. Barhoumah is biased in favour of his own views."

In the meantime, "My Book" will be published entirely at the author's expense by the Arab Foundation for Research and Publication in Beirut.

Mr. Barhoumah's main concern is whether the public will read his book for its prose, or "seek it out because of the scandal."

"We are on the doors of the 21st century and there are still ignorant people judging our literary works by their own morals," he concluded.

## Minister, directors discuss summer youth camps

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Youth Mohammad Daoudieh Tuesday chaired a meeting for the directors of youth departments in the various governorates to discuss issues related to Al Hussein summer youth camps.

They also discussed the new organisational structure of the ministry, as well as amendments to the laws regulating relations between their departments and sports federations.

Mr. Daoudieh stressed the need to attract larger numbers of youth to Al Hussein youth camps through forging closer coordination with relevant governmental and non-governmental institutions.

He disclosed ministry plans to institutionalise Al Hussein youth camps and create a new department at the ministry for the organisation of these camps.

Mr. Daoudieh said the ministry will provide more support for youth centres stating in this regard 1997 will be the designated Year of the Youth Centres.

The meeting discussed a number of proposals made by directors of youth departments, including the formation of a permanent committee for youth camps, increasing the camp duration to one month from the present three weeks.

## What's Going On

### EXHIBITIONS

\* Ramdaniat exhibition from Wadi Dana Nature Reserve (silver nature jewelry, jams, dried fruits) and Jordan River Designs (JRD) ornaments (tablecloths, candles, embroidered accessories) at JRD showroom, Jabal Amman, Frist Circle (Tel. 613081), until Feb. 10.

\* Exhibition on the "Institute of the Arab World in Paris" at the French Cultural Centre, until Feb. 6.

\* Paintings by Muhammad Ali Shaker at the Orient Gallery, Issam Ajlouni Street, Shmeisani, until Jan. 30.

\* Photographic exhibition on the life of the Founder of Pakistan at Quaid-e-Azam Hall, Embassy of Pakistan, Jabal Weibdeh (Tel. 622787, 624680), until January 31.

\* Works by Jordanian artists at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Jan. 30.



## Milosevic under pressure as Russia favours protesters

BELGRADE (AFP) — International pressure was back on President Slobodan Milosevic Tuesday, after Russia — Serbia's traditional ally — took the side of the opposition in the two-month political crisis.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov was to meet Mr. Milosevic during the day, after the Kremlin envoy said Monday that his government should accept opposition victories in 14 municipalities — including the capital Belgrade — following Nov. 17 elections.

To do so would "open the way to a resolution of the current solution," Mr. Ivanov was reported as saying by the domestic Tanjug News Agency.

A time for Ivanov's meeting with the president — who is showing no signs of backing down — was not immediately confirmed.

The government's refusal to accept victories by opposition political parties that belong to the together coalition has resulted in daily street protests in Belgrade.

Mr. Ivanov met with a delegation of protesting students earlier Tuesday, after

seeing opposition leaders Vuk Draskovic and Vesna Petic Monday as well as Yugoslav Foreign Minister Milan Milutinovic.

In a change of tactics, the opposition from Tuesday plans to hold its daily rally at 8:30 p.m. (1930 GMT) instead of 3:00 p.m.

In doing so, it hopes to draw into the city centre the thousands of Belgrade residents who until now have been demonstrating noisily in their own neighbourhoods to draw out the government-controlled television newscast.

On Monday, the United States lodged a formal protest with the Serbian government about the use of police violence on demonstrators.

Washington's charges d'affaires in Belgrade, Richard Miles, told Mr. Milutinovic that Serbian authorities had "reneged on their pledge" not to use force on demonstrators, the State Department said.

He was referring to two police charges on demonstrators last weekend, in which 20 people were injured.

Mr. Ivanov said Monday that Serbia should accept the findings by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) that the opposition had won 14 towns and cities in the elections.

"Russia wants Yugoslavia to find a solution to the current solution, in the interests of unity and prosperity so that the country becomes democratic," he said.

Mr. Draskovic repeated together's position: "The condition of all conditions is the recognition of Nov. 17 results."

"We have no mandate to discuss the results. They have to be recognised and implemented completely, and then, the demonstrations shall stop and the dialogue can start," Mr. Draskovic told reporters.

Russia has traditionally supported Mr. Milosevic, but has kept a relatively low profile during the crisis over the local elections flared up.

Legal experts at Together meanwhile said they would appeal to the Supreme Court of Serbia, after the regime Monday annulled the opposition victory in Bel-

grade.

A top court, making what it called a final ruling, overturned a decision two weeks ago by the Belgrade Election Commission to recognise Together's victory in the capital where one in five Serbians live.

The decision came as the opposition took control of Nis, the country's second largest town, for the first time in 50 years.

Nis represents perhaps the biggest concession the government has made in the face of the popular protests.

Political analysts believe the government is hardening its stance by recognising only limited success for Together, allowing it uncontested control in only five municipalities — Uzice, Kragujevac, Zrenjanin, Lapovo and Nis.

In his Dec. 27 report for the OSCE, former Spanish Premier Felipe Gonzalez maintained that the opposition has also won Piro, Kraljevo, Smederevska Palanka, Vrsac, Soko Banja, Pancevo, Jagodina and Sabac, as well as Belgrade.

## Ethnic factor enables Taliban to advance deep into strategic valley

GHORBAND, Afghanistan (AFP) — Thousands of armed locals here are helping the Taliban militia to force a new route into opposition territory after anti-Taliban troops cut the main artery to northern Afghanistan, locals said Tuesday.

Villagers in this key valley gave their backing to the fundamentalist fighters — who share the same ethnic origin as them — as opposition forces Sunday blew up the strategic Salang Highway to stop the Taliban advance.

"More than 1,000 armed people in Shinwari and another 1,000 in Siyad districts, who have joined the Taliban, are fighting against the other side," locals and international aid workers in the Ghorband Valley said.

The villagers have already gone into battle with their new allies and were Tuesday fighting opposition alliance troops around Chardeh, at the end of this valley which starts 80 kilometres northwest of the capital Kabul.

The Ghorband Valley, which the Taliban seized much of last week after taking two strategic towns near here from the opposition, is a "back door" to the fiefdom of northern warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum, analysts say.

The Taliban could use the narrow and dusty 140 kilometre-long valley to cut through to the central province of Bamian before heading north into the soft underbelly of Gen. Dostum's territory in Baghlan province, they say.

The Salang Highway, the main route to northern Afghanistan, was blocked by

the anti-Taliban coalition — which includes Gen. Dostum and the ousted Afghan government's top commander Ahmad Shah Masoud — when they blasted the road, effectively cutting the mountainous country in two.

"I think the country has been physically cut into two after the blockade of the highways," said truck driver Abdul Karim as he turned back after trying to get from Kabul to the northern city of Mazar-e-Sharif.

Hundreds of north-bound vehicles were Tuesday stranded in the Salang Valley after a stretch of the road was blasted away about 100 kilometres north of Kabul late Sunday.

Other drivers complained that even if the Ghorband Valley reopened, the trip through it to the north would take 48 hours driving instead of eight hours on the Salang Highway.

Groups of armed and turbaned ethnic-Pashtoon villagers here, sunning themselves against their mud houses, pledged support for the mainly Pashtoon Taliban in their battle to push northwards.

Locals said although the new allies were already fighting together, no major assault had yet been launched on the village of Chardeh which guards access to Bamian, controlled by another member of the opposition alliance, Karim Khalili.

"We have already captured 100 Kalashnikovs and (have taken) 50 Dostum soldiers prisoner," said Mulla Gulmarjan, a Pashtoon fighter in the valley's Shinwari district said.

The ultra-orthodox Tale-

ban, which emerged from the Koranic schools of Pakistan just over two years ago, have seized more than two-thirds of the war-torn country, including the capital Kabul which fell to them on Sept. 27.

Fighting between the militia and the opposition forces, which are battling for control of the area north of Kabul, broke out again 12 days ago after a three-month lull.

The latest clashes saw the militia seize control of the crucial towns of Jabul Seraj and Gulbaha, which gave them access to the Salang and Ghorband valleys and put them at the doorstep of Mr. Masoud's Panjshir Valley stronghold.

The move prompted the retreating opposition forces to blow up the rocky hillside above the Salang Highway — which leads to the Salang Pass, made famous for its battles during the 10-year Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, about 10 refugees fleeing fighting in Afghanistan's northwest provinces die from hunger and cold each day, U.N. sources said Tuesday.

An estimated 50,000 Afghans from northwest Badghis province have been forced to flee fighting between the Taliban militia and the opposition forces of Gen. Dostum over the past three months, the sources said.

While some had returned to their homes since hostilities escalated in the region last November, the U.N. sources said there were an estimated 24,000 others who had moved to the western Taliban-held city of Herat.

## U.K. Conservatives soldier on after surprise defeat

LONDON (R) — Prime Minister John Major's conservative government shrugged off a surprise defeat in parliament Monday night and said it would not change election tactics.

The opposition took advantage of ministers being away at a cabinet brainstorming session at the prime minister's country residence to stage a late-night ambush in the House of Commons on a vote over government education plans.

The government shrugged off the defeat, saying it would try to reinstate the plans — to allow schools which have opted out of local authority control to expand — when the education bill goes to the House of Lords, parliament's upper chamber.

Health Secretary Stephen Dorrell dismissed suggestions that the government was in trouble and risked being unable to hold on to power until Mr. Major's preferred election date of May 1.

"It's the prime minister's job to fix the date, not mine, I'm not going to speculate about that... nobody's limping along," Mr. Dorrell told a British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) Radio interview Tuesday.

The government's defeat by 273 votes to 272 on an education bill amendment was not sufficiently serious to prompt a vote of confidence, which could push the government out of power if the Conservatives lost.

But it proved how difficult the main opposition

Labour Party can make it for the government to keep the upper hand in parliament. Recent opinion polls have shown the Conservatives some 20 points behind Labour.

A breakdown in trust between Labour and the Conservatives has led to the end of cross-party arrangements allowing members of parliament detained elsewhere to miss votes without affecting the result, offering Labour plenty of chances for ambushes.

Labour's education spokesman David Blunkett mocked at Mr. Major's chances of survival, saying the government "announces that it is going through to May and can't even get through the evening."

## New Austrian chancellor, government sworn in

VIENNA (AFP) — Austria's new Chancellor Viktor Klima was sworn in Tuesday following the resignation earlier this month of his predecessor Franz Vranitzky of the Social Democratic Party (SPOE).

The Austrian press Tuesday hailed Mr. Klima's appointment as well as his choice of ministers.

"With the radical reshuffling of his government Viktor Klima reveals a dynamic and energetic attitude," reported the mass-circulation daily Kronen Zeitung.

Kurier, another mass-circulation daily, judged that Mr. Klima's "team is competent to take action... Viktor Klima has the talent that is needed to be chancellor."

The Kronen Zeitung, which compares Mr. Klima without hesitation to U.S. President Bill Clinton, published results of a survey according to which 43 per cent of the population is happy with the new government.

Under Mr. Klima's leadership, the government coalition in place since March 1996, between the dominant SPOE and the smaller conservative People's Party (OeVP) remains intact.

In his first press conference as Chancellor Klima said he intended to pursue cooperation with the OeVP in a "loyal and frank" manner.

He rejected the possibility of a coalition between the SPOE and the far-right Freedom Party of Jörg Haider, which came a close second to the Social Democrats in European elections in December 1995 and is the third biggest party in parliament.

But the Austrian press predicted that Mr. Klima's leadership would herald closer ties between the Social Democrats and Mr. Haider's nationalist party.

Until now Mr. Vranitzky's aversion to Mr. Haider had consistently hampered the rise of the Freedom Party.

Mr. Klima completely renewed the SPOE wing of his coalition when he announced the composition of his new government last week but he will head an unchanged OeVP team.

From the previous SPOE cabinet Mr. Klima has retained only Caspar Eimann, formerly interior minister, whom he has made transport and science minister.



A riot policeman smiles as his colleagues block the way of opposition demonstrators during a protest in the centre of the Yugoslavia capital Monday (Reuters photo)

## Algerian trade union leader wounded in attack

ALGIERS (Agencies) — The head of Algeria's powerful UGTA trade union, Abdul Hak Benhamouda, was seriously wounded by gunshots in an attack Tuesday, security services said.

Mr. Benhamouda, leader of the General Union of Algerian Workers (UGTA) and a supporter of President Liamine Zeroual, was admitted to Mustapha Hospital.

His condition was reported as "serious."

The attack took place at May 1 Square, in the heart of Algiers.

Algeria is in the throes of a bloody civil war between the military-backed government and hardline Islamic groups.

Mr. Benhamouda has been one of the main figures in Algeria's political and trade union life.

He actively supported Mr. Zeroual during the presidential election of November 1995.

Recently he announced that he would leave the UGTA this year to set up a political party.

The Arabic-language Al

Alam Essiassi (Political World) newspaper has reported that Mr. Benhamouda had been designated by several organisations within the so-called "revolutionary family" to lead a pro-Zeroual party.

Meanwhile, the Algerian government Tuesday began deploying security forces near two main Muslim guerrilla strongholds in the northern outskirts of Algiers, residents in the Algerian capital said.

The residents, speaking by telephone, said they believed the move might be the start of a huge operation in the area to wipe out Muslim rebels and give substance to President Zeroual's vow last Friday to eradicate "terrorism."

"They started moving equipment near Djebel Koukou. We saw soldiers and Ninja (anti-terrorist crack troops) coming with the material during the night," said a woman living in the area.

Djebel Koukou is a hilltop working-class neighbourhood overlooking the Muslim fundamentalist Bab Al

Oued stronghold in Algiers. At least five bodies of slaughtered civilians were found early this month in Djebel Koukou, which experienced some of Algiers' heaviest battles between guerrillas and security forces last year.

Residents said more security forces were seen near Bainem Forest, on the northern edge of Algiers, where many guerrillas were believed holed up, taking advantage of the forest's maze of caves and grottos.

The reports of the deployments coincided with a call by the government-controlled newspaper Al Moudjahid for people to help the authorities fight the guerrillas.

"The state, guarantor of the security of people and property, is called to intensify its action against the violence. We should all be aware of this tragic situation in order to give a push to destiny, putting the Algerian nation above all," said Al Moudjahid.

Mr. Zeroual, a former army general, did not unveil any security measures to quash the guerrilla move-

ment in his Friday speech but said:

"I confirm to the Algerian people the determination of the Algerian state to battle against the terrorist groups until their final eradication."

More than 200 people have been killed since the start on Jan. 10 of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan in massacres and bombings, mostly in Algiers and surrounding towns and hamlets, according to Algerian newspapers.

An Algerian Islamist group calling itself the Faithful of the Sermon said in a statement Monday Algeria's future would be "more bloody and the earth will tremble under the feet of the tyrannical regime."

In the statement sent to an international news agency, the group said it controlled zones in Algeria and that Mr. Zeroual's nationwide speech Friday showed his "regime" was near its end.

It was not possible to check the authenticity of the statement which mixed verses from the Koran, with accusations against the Algerian authorities.

## Australian republic push bursts back to life

CANBERRA (R) — The push for Australia to become a republic has burst back to life with renewed calls for a national vote on the issue this year, amid charges that monarchist Prime Minister John Howard is allowing the issue die.

"We feel that the time has come for the government now to match its populist rhetoric to political reality and to have a plebiscite," Malcolm Turnbull, chairman of the Australian Republican Movement, said Tuesday.

Liberal leader Howard, who ousted Republican Labour Prime Minister Paul Keating last March, made an election promise to hold a people's convention and plebiscite on the republic issue in 1997.

But media reports say the government is planning to water down the convention, allowing the national and state governments to elect all delegates, and possibly delay it until 1998.

"If John Howard wants to

be taken seriously as being committed to democracy then the people's convention should be chosen by the people," Mr. Turnbull said at a news conference.

"I'm very concerned that it's become a delaying tactic. It (the government) promised a people's convention in 1997. We are now in 1997 and we don't have the faintest idea what they're intending," Mr. Turnbull said.

But Deputy Prime Minister Tim Fischer Tuesday denied the government was moving too slowly towards a promised vote on removing Britain's Queen Elizabeth as head-of-state.

"This is a second-order issue as we seek to boost our export effort, as we seek to ensure job creation across the country," Mr. Fischer told reporters.

Mr. Fischer said he was confident the government would set up a people's convention and a plebiscite on the republic issue.

The convention aims to produce options to be voted

on in a national plebiscite, but this vote would not be binding on the government.

To change the Australian constitution to allow a republic, a majority of Australians in a majority of the country's six states must support a referendum favouring a republic.

Mr. Howard's cabinet discussed its republic plans Tuesday at its first meeting for the year and Republicans are watching closely to see whether the government waters down any of its election promises.

"It is disturbing that nearly a year since it was elected, the Howard government is overdue in announcing its programme," New South Wales opposition leader Peter Collins said Monday.

"The perception is growing, I trust wrongly, that the federal government is reneging on its promises, which could become politically damaging," said Mr. Collins, a Republican member of Mr. Howard's Liberal Party.

Opinion polls show about

half of Australians want a republic but also that they think the country faces more pressing problems. Many are uncommitted.

Mr. Keating began his republican push shortly after he became prime minister in 1992 and the country became focussed on the issue for a few years.

Mr. Keating hoped to replace Queen Elizabeth with an Australian president either before the Sydney Olympic Games in 2000 or on Jan. 1, 2001, the centenary of Australia's federation from six British colonies.

During the past 12 months the republic issue faded from the political arena. But the 1997 Australian of the year, Peter Doherty, rekindled the debate on Australia Day, Jan. 26, when he called for a republic.

"I don't see any reason for maintaining a situation in which the head of state of Australia is the queen of England," said Mr. Doherty, a medical researcher who jointly won the Nobel Prize for Medicine in 1996.

## Burma announces jailing of 14 for role in unrest

RANGOON (AFP) — Burma's military junta said Tuesday that 14 people, including five members of Aung San Suu Kyi's main opposition party, have been jailed for seven years for their part in last month's student protests.

Burmese military intelligence said in two statements that the 14 were sentenced under the Emergency Act of 1950 after being "found guilty of agitation and throwing rocks at security personnel during the student unrest last December."

Mrs. Suu Kyi, reached by telephone from Bangkok, said the sentences were a sham since the trials were not made public and the accused had been denied access to proper counsel.

"I don't for a moment believe that they were found guilty since they were obviously tried in camera," she said. "The fact that they were tried in camera... indicates that they were not guilty."

One of the statements, which did not name those jailed, said the sentences had been carried out on Jan. 27 at the court in Insein township, the Rangoon suburb where the country's most notorious prison is located.

The statements said that five of the 14 were members of Mrs. Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) and none were students.

Mrs. Suu Kyi said the NLD had not been informed about the sentences and

was unaware the trial had taken place. "They don't tell us or the families anything," she said.

"If the evidence against them was strong, there would be all the more reason that they should be tried in public," she added.

The opposition leader has frequently criticised the summary trials carried out by the Burmese military and its failure to inform families of trials and judgements — as well as allow for independent defence lawyers.

Trials for violations of the country's draconian public security laws — as is the case for many criminal cases — are held in secret and the accused are forced to accept counsel provided by the state.

Mrs. Suu Kyi said she

doubted that none of the 14 were students since a large number had been picked up following the unrest in December. She added that the NLD's first step would be to find out the names of those sentenced.

Tuesday's announcement came just 10 days after 20 people — including 14 NLD members — were handed seven-year sentences for taking part in the wave of student protests which brought a security clampdown in Rangoon.

Mrs. Suu Kyi said the party had only managed to identify one of the 20 people whose sentences were announced on Jan. 18 — an NLD youth who worked in the garden of her lakeside compound who was sentenced to seven years.

KINSHASA (AFP) — Zaire's army has announced that it has captured 100 rebels in the eastern part of the country, who had staged several attacks in the last few days.

They are the rebels who had been active in the area of the town of Kisumu, about 100 kilometres from the town of Kisumu.

It was the first time the army had made such a statement since the rebels had taken control of the town of Kisumu in late December.

Local officials said the army had captured the rebels in a surprise attack on the town of Kisumu, which was under rebel control.

The rebels, who were active in the area of the town of Kisumu, had been active in the area of the town of Kisumu, which was under rebel control.

## S. Korean p

SEOUL (R) — South Korea's government has announced that it has decided to send a delegation to the North Korean capital, Pyongyang, to discuss the possibility of a peace treaty between the two countries.

The delegation, which will be led by a senior government official, is expected to arrive in Pyongyang in the next few days.

The government has been working to improve relations with the North since the end of the Korean War in 1953, and this move is seen as a significant step in that direction.

The delegation will discuss a range of issues, including the possibility of a peace treaty, and the government hopes to achieve a breakthrough in the talks.

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Protesters during a protest in the town of Walikale.

## Zairean army counteroffensive stalls

KISANGANI, Zaire (Agencies) — The Zairean army's promised massive counter-offensive against rebels in eastern Zaire appears to have stalled in recent days, several sources in this town on the eastern border said Tuesday.

They said the rebels, who control a large swathe of eastern Zaire, have maintained their positions along a front 300 kilometres east of Kisangani and about 100 kilometres west of the town of Walikale.

It was impossible to independently verify the reports and the government has made no official statements. Clashes have flared chiefly near the town of Walikale, 150 kilometres west of Gombe, where both sides are engaged in a fight which has lasted for two weeks.

Local sources said the slowdown in the government's counteroffensive was linked to problems in resupplying troops with weapons and ammunition. They said no ground corridor had been set up to resupply the troops and the only form of transport available was by air, which was insufficient.

Observers said that with the end of January approaching, another potential flashpoint for the government was the soldiers' salaries.

The soldiers, who earn an average of one dollar a

month, have not been paid in months and have already staged two rebellions in the capital Kinshasa. Recent government budget cuts may also fuel discontent within the army, sources here said.

Meanwhile, Rwanda's military strongman said Tuesday he was concerned at the government counteroffensive in eastern Zaire and hoped the campaign would not spill over into Rwanda.

Vice-President and Defence Minister Paul Kagame however said Zairean rebels current appeared to be winning in fighting with Zairean troops backed by foreign mercenaries in the east.

"We are taking seriously the possibility of a counter-offensive by the Zaireans and of course we want to keep this outside Rwanda," Gen. Kagame, Rwanda's former Tutsi rebel leader, told reporters at Kigali Airport.

"But at the moment it appears this is a fight the rebels are winning and the Zaireans seem to be more talk than action on the ground as events are showing," he added.

Gen. Kagame was speaking at departure ceremonies for Tanzanian President Benjamin Mkapa, who ended a 24-hour visit to Rwanda where he discussed security issues with the country's leaders.

Zairean rebel leader Laurent Kabila denied Monday a Zairean government announcement that its troops last week recaptured the town of Walikale, 120 kilometres from rebel headquarters in the city of Gombe, and had killed 100 rebels.

Mr. Kabila told the British Broadcasting Corporation that the rebels had so far had no trouble from the counteroffensive announced by Kinshasa. He said foreign mercenaries had stopped fighting and resumed training after two were killed by rebels.

He denied Walikale had fallen and dismissed the government report of its capture as propaganda to fool the Zairean people.

Mr. Kabila said the government campaign would fail to wrest a swathe of eastern Zaire from the rebels because the Zairean army was ineffective and mercenaries wanted to live to spend their salaries.

Witnesses said the shrouded body of a white mercenary killed fighting rebels arrived by helicopter over the weekend in the city of Kisangani, the headquarters for the counteroffensive.

Up to 300 soldiers of fortune, many Serbs from the former Yugoslavia, are in eastern Zaire to help the campaign to regain control over the east ordered by President Mobutu Sese Seko.

## CIA taught torture methods in training manual

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) taught torture techniques in the early 1980s, including ways to break a prisoner's will through sensory deprivation and inducing strong fear, a newly declassified CIA training manual showed.

The guide, Human Resources Exploitation Training Manual — 1983, appears to have been designed for training security forces allied with Washington's anti-Communist crusade in Central America under former President Ronald Reagan.

The CIA said Monday that a policy strongly opposing the use of torture had been written into updates of the training manual between 1984 and early 1985.

A cover sheet inserted by 1985 cautioned students: "The use of force, mental torture, threats, insults or exposure to inhumane treatment of any kind as an aid to interrogation is prohibited by law, both international and domestic it is neither authorised nor condoned."

"We respect and are committed to internationally recognised human rights standards," Mark Mansfield, a CIA spokesman, said on Monday. "We do not engage in activities that could be construed as support for, encouragement of, or complicity in human rights violations."

"Adherence to human rights principles is not only emphasised in our training but it is intrinsic to all of our activities," added the CIA spokesman, who was long involved in training pro-U.S. security forces abroad.

## Maskhadov on course for Chechen election victory

GROZNY (R) — Aslan Maskhadov, who forced Russian troops out of Chechnya with a combination of guerrilla warfare and shrewd diplomacy, appeared headed Tuesday for a clear victory in presidential elections.

At Mr. Maskhadov's headquarters in the Chechen capital, Grozny, guerrillas in camouflage uniforms with rifles slung over their shoulders hugged each other as women laughed and celebrated.

"Preliminary figures allow us to say that Aslan Maskhadov has become president of Chechnya," said Mr. Maskhadov's closest aide and spokesman Maybek Vachagayev as he raised a clenched fist in the air in a victory gesture following Monday's poll.

The claim, if confirmed by official results, might offer some comfort in Moscow after a disastrous military campaign.

Although he has vowed to confront the Kremlin over the delicate issue of the mainly Muslim region's sovereignty.

As the man who inflicted humiliating defeats on the Russian army he is surely no friend of the Kremlin. But among 13 candidates in Monday's poll, the quietly spoken former Soviet army colonel is the man Russian leaders have learned to deal with at the negotiating table.

Mr. Vachagayev said early

results showed Mr. Maskhadov had captured about 58 per cent, against 30 per cent for chief rival Shamil Basayev. If no candidate wins 50 per cent in the first round, a second ballot will be held between the two top candidates.

Mr. Maskhadov negotiated a peace deal with Moscow last year, providing for complete withdrawal of Russian troops after a two-year war that resulted in tens of thousands of dead and widespread destruction in Chechnya.

About a kilometre away from Mr. Maskhadov's headquarters, near the Minutka traffic roundabout that was long a focus of fighting, the mood in rival Basayev's camp was sombre.

A Basayev victory would be a further bitter blow for the Kremlin which sees him without reservation as a terrorist.

Commander Basayev led a raid on the south Russian town of Budennovsk in 1995, taking some 1,000 hostages. About 100 people died in the action, which revived a flagging guerrilla campaign.

All leading candidates say they would press quickly for sovereignty, despite a provision in the peace deal deferring the issue for five years. Mr. Maskhadov demands "war reparations" to rebuild an economy based on the oil industry.

A Russian deputy foreign

minister, underlining Kremlin sensitivity on the sovereignty issue, said at the weekend that Moscow was ready to break off relations with any country that moved to grant Chechnya diplomatic recognition.

Another leading Maskhadov rival, Movladi Udugov, virtually acknowledged defeat.

"It's time to finish with the dividing up of power and get down to work," he said, in a clear indication he would be willing to cooperate with Mr. Maskhadov to prevent any future internal conflict. Mr. Maskhadov seemed to be sure of victory.

The present acting President Zemlikhan Yandarbiyev said he would not work with Mr. Maskhadov. "There is no precedent in history for an outgoing president to work with the new one," he told the Moscow radio station Ekho Moskvy.

Electoral Commission chairman Mumadi Saydaiyev told Russian Television Mr. Maskhadov had more than 60 per cent by early morning. A preliminary result may be available towards evening, he said.

In Moscow, President Boris Yeltsin, recovering from pneumonia, called a meeting of his top-level consultative council to discuss the results of the poll Tuesday. Outside observers have said they were impressed by the smoothness of the voting and an absence of major violations.

Mr. Maskhadov's task will be far from simple. Chechnya has won de facto independence with the withdrawal of Russian troops. But with its back to the towering Caucasus Mountains, it is hemmed in by Russian territory and is all but bankrupt.

There were no reports of violence in a land awash with arms.

Mr. Yeltsin admits sending troops to crush the Chechen rebels in 1994 ranks as one of the biggest mistakes of his presidency. It could yet be one that haunts him well into a second term already overshadowed by illness.

Chechens in their devastated capital Grozny voiced mixed emotions about the prospect of Mr. Maskhadov as their leader.

"I think that today Mr. Maskhadov is the best man to stabilise the situation in Chechnya," said one young voter.

"Now they (Russia) will have to recognise us, we're people too, like Portugal, Holland, we're not monkeys," said another. "With Maskhadov as president everything will be OK."

But another armed man sporting the black beard of a guerrilla, feared Mr. Maskhadov would be "too soft" on Moscow.

"He may be a soldier, but he's weak," he said. "The people who voted for Mr. Maskhadov are opposed to independence."

Mr. Maskhadov's task will be far from simple.

Chechnya has won de facto independence with the withdrawal of Russian troops. But with its back to the towering Caucasus Mountains, it is hemmed in by Russian territory and is all but bankrupt.

## Albanians backing away from confrontation

TIRANA (AFP) — President Sali Berisha Tuesday promised compensation for Albanians who lost their life savings to Pyramid schemes whose collapse has triggered violent protests around the country.

He was addressing a crowd of some 5,000 government supporters who gathered in the capital Tirana even though the government said Monday it was cancelling a rally it initially planned for Tuesday.

Mr. Berisha said the government would "work to repay the money that was stolen" from hundreds of thousands of people in Europe's poorest country and that the issue would

be resolved "quickly and fairly."

Albanians backed away from a major confrontation Tuesday with both opposition and government calling on their supporters not to stage rival mass rallies in the capital.

The ruling Democratic Party had urged its followers instead to repair windows and damage to public buildings caused by Sunday's violent protests over the collapse of Pyramid savings schemes. The opposition Socialist Party, which has accused the ruling party of colluding with organisers of the bogus get-rich-quick plans, had earlier issued its own appeal for calm in the party paper Zeri i Popullit.

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# News

## Netanyahu to affirm hardline position on Jerusalem to Pope Israeli digs said to threaten Al Aqsa Mosque

ROME (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was quoted on Tuesday as saying he will tell Pope John Paul II at their first meeting next week that his position on a united Jerusalem was firm.

"Jerusalem has to stay united. We are ready to give guarantees to Christians and Muslims but we do not intend to discuss the city's political sovereignty," Rome's Il Messaggero quoted him as saying in an interview in Jerusalem.

Mr. Netanyahu, who took office in May, visits Rome next week and is scheduled to be received by the Pope on Monday.

The prime minister told Il Messaggero that he will not shy away from discussing Jerusalem.

"I will describe to the Pope our peace plan. I will listen to his opinions and ideas. I also would like to describe to him my plans for Jerusalem and remind him that the only period in the last 2,000 years in which the holy places were accessible to all was that from 1967 to today," he was quoted as saying.

The Vatican wants international guarantees protecting the Holy City as sacred to Jews, Christians and Muslims.

Most states including the Vatican do not recognise Israel's 1980 claim to Jerusalem as its "united and eternal capital" and keep their embassies in or near Tel Aviv.

The Vatican and Israel established full diplomatic ties two years ago, ending centuries of often hostile Catholic-Jewish relations.

Mr. Netanyahu is also expected to discuss the possibility of a papal trip to the Holy Land.

The Pope and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat discussed the Middle East peace process at the Vatican last month.

### Tunnels threaten Aqsa

Two tunnels dug by Israeli archeologists threaten to cause the collapse of Jerusalem's Al Aqsa Mosque, Palestinian officials said Tuesday.

"Two tunnels have been excavated near the southeast edge of the mosque compound and could lead to the col-

lapse of the mosque if they continue," Rad Salah, mayor of the Israeli-Arab town of Um Al Fahm, told journalists.

One of the tunnels, several metres in length, ends at a recently-built brick wall six metres below the Marwani Mosque, an underground prayer area under Al Aqsa, he said.

"Israeli authorities should know that Al Aqsa belongs to the world's one billion moslems and any harm to this holy site will provoke an explosion of anger," warned Mr. Salah, also a member of the Islamic Movement in Israel.

Mr. Salah and Najeh Bkeirat, head of the Committee for the Preservation of Al Aqsa Heritage, showed photos of the tunnels at a press conference near the mosque esplanade.

"We discovered these tunnels by accident two weeks ago while walking around Al Aqsa esplanade," Mr. Bkeirat said.

Both officials called for an end to the digs and the setting up of a committee of inquiry with Muslim representatives.

The director of Al Aqsa Mosque, Sheikh Mohsen Hussein, also accused Israeli authorities on Sunday of digging tunnels near the mosque.

But the head of excavations at Israel's antiquities authority, Amir Drori, denied the charges. "Allegations of tunnel building are completely baseless," he said.

"Digging did take place nearby to reveal a subterranean system of water canals, part of which pass" the mosque compound, Mr. Drori acknowledged.

"Part of these canals were excavated in the 1970s but the dig was stopped and we have no intention of resuming them," he said.

Violent clashes broke out last September when Palestinians protested the opening by Israel of an archeological tunnel running alongside the mosque compound.

In the worst bloodshed in 30 years, more than 80 people died.

The Palestinians accused the Netanyahu government of seeking to damage the mosque compound, while Mr. Netanyahu insisted the tunnel was merely part of a tourist site.

## Assad said grooming successor

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Syrian President Hafez Al Assad may be cleaning up family matters to pave the way for his eldest surviving son to succeed him, the New York Times said Tuesday.

Quoting diplomats and prominent Syrians, the daily said there were signs that Mr. Assad was stifling any ambitions for power his brothers and nephews may have and grooming his son Bashar Al Assad, 31, to eventually take the helm.

The sources said Mr. Assad's 64-year-old brother Jamil, departed abruptly for Paris late last month not for medical treatment, as officials explained, but on the president's orders after his mafia-style business dealings in Syria's two main ports became an embarrassment.

On the other hand, Mr. Assad's younger brother, Rifaat, 59, has been put under heavy internal surveillance on suspicion he is trying to renew his ties with the upper echelons of the Syrian military. This comes five years after he was allowed back from exile in Paris following his attempt to overthrow his brother in 1983.

A restaurant owned by one of Rifaat Assad's sons was shut down in November as part of an investigation into corruption: the first among the relatives of top Syrian officials whose business activities have been unceremoniously reined in, the source said.

"The president has had it with his brothers and their sons, and he's trying to do something about it," a prominent Syrian told the daily in the front-page article.

At the same time, Bashar Al Assad is appearing in posters along with his father and late brother Basil — killed in a 1994 automobile accident, and is being hailed as "our

## Assad appears in public for first time since Jan. 6

PRESIDENT HAFEZ AL ASSAD Tuesday made his first public appearance since undergoing surgery for a prostate problem on Jan. 6. Mr. Assad Tuesday received Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam and Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa. They briefed the Syrian leader on their visit to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Mr. Khaddam and Mr. Sharaa returned home Monday, but resumed their Gulf mission after briefing the president. They flew to the United Arab Emirates late Tuesday.

hope" for Syria's future.

Hafez Al Assad, 66, who has a history of heart trouble and diabetes, is recovering from prostate surgery.

"Things feel very fragile," one diplomat told the daily. However, the sources point out that since the Syrian constitution requires that a president be at least 40, Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam remains, for the short-term, Mr. Assad's most likely successor.

Those who have tried to depict a pattern in all the Assad family shuffles believe the president has someone else in mind for his succession.

"Hafez Assad clearly wants to be succeeded by his son," a Damascus-based diplomat said. "And if you ask me whether all this is about securing the future or polishing the present, I would say that it is probably both."

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Saudis report 2,120 kidney transplants

RIYADH (AFP) — Surgeons in Saudi Arabia have conducted 2,120 kidney transplants since it became one of the first Arab countries to approve the procedure 17 years ago, officials said Tuesday. "Transplants of kidneys from living persons succeed 96.5 per cent of the time, while transplants from persons determined to be brain dead or deep coma have an 83 per cent success rate," Abdullah Al Khedr, president for the national committee for kidney transplants, told the official Saudi Press Agency.

### Turk parliament rejects Ciller probe

ANKARA (R) — The Turkish Parliament on Tuesday decided against setting up a new inquiry into Deputy Prime Minister Tansu Ciller that could have sent her to the supreme court on corruption charges. Deputy Speaker Yasin Hatipoglu said deputies voted 247 to 242 to reject an opposition proposal to probe allegations that Mrs. Ciller was involved in corruption at the state-owned Turban hotel and tourism company.

### Thieves beat up Sadat caretaker

CAIRO (AFP) — Thieves broke into the summer home of former Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's son at dawn on Tuesday, beat up the caretaker and stole telephones, blankets and a gas canister, police said. Police denied an earlier report by the Egyptian news agency MENA which had said that Gamal Anwar Al Sadat was beaten up by the thieves and said he was not home at the time of the burglary. The incident took place at dawn at Sadat's summer home in the residential Agami suburb of the northern Mediterranean city of Alexandria. Three thieves broke into the house through the front door, threatened caretaker Morsi Ali Hassaballah, 26, with knives and beat him up before fleeing, police said. Three accomplices were waiting outside the villa in a van, witnesses told police.

### Israeli jailed for diamond smuggling

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — A South African court has sentenced an Israeli citizen to five years' imprisonment or a 250,000-rand (\$34,350) fine for unlawful possession of diamonds, police said Tuesday. Police spokesman Jan

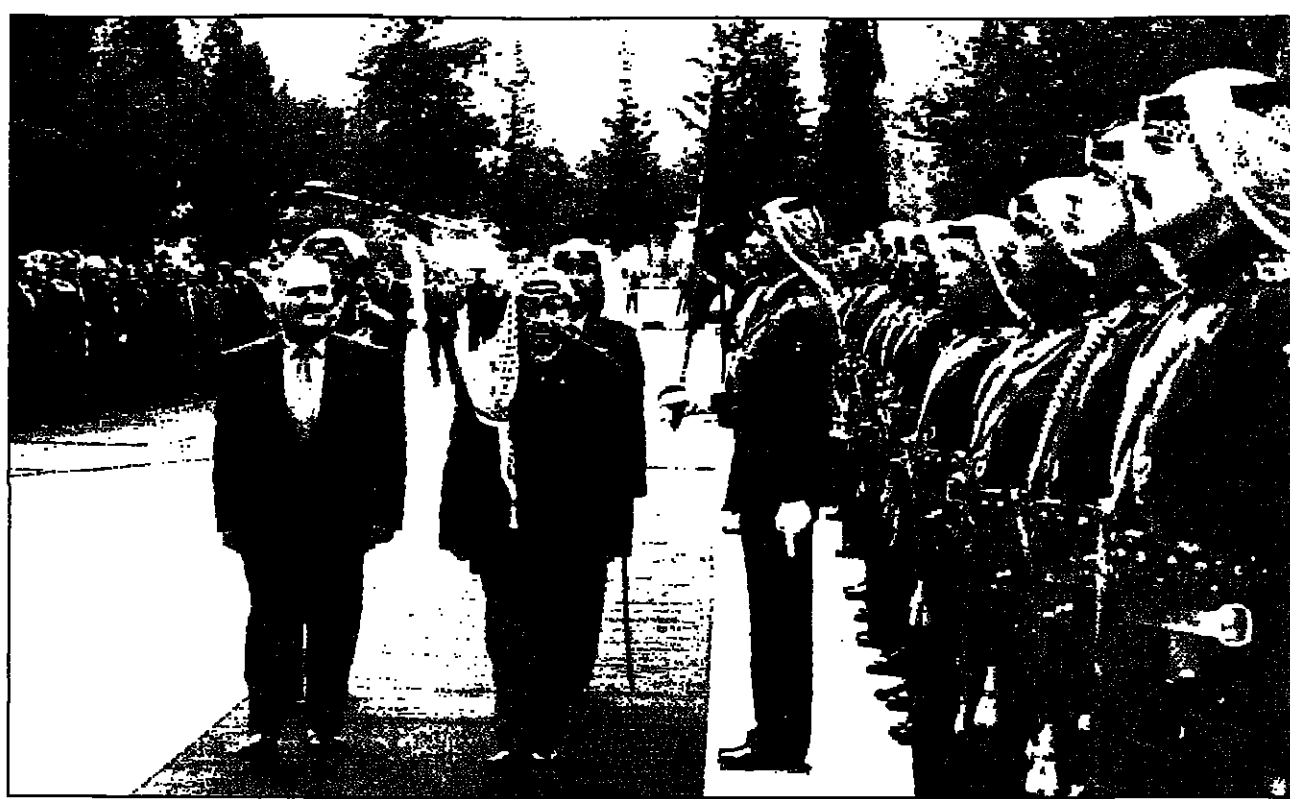
Combrink said Ziv Volk, 32, pleaded guilty at the nearby Kempton Park regional court Monday to charges of illegally possessing more than two million rand (\$434,800) worth of unpolished diamonds. Captain Combrink said police, acting on a tip-off, arrested the man Saturday night at the Johannesburg international airport and X-rays revealed that he had hidden the stones, weighing 782 carats, in his rectum. They said Volk, who was acting as a courier for unidentified dealers, had arrived in South Africa Friday and was scheduled to leave for Tel Aviv the following night.

### Egypt foils antiquity smuggling

CAIRO (AFP) — The Egyptian authorities have foiled attempts to smuggle priceless archaeological objects across the border with Israel, the government daily Al Ahram reported Tuesday. The authorities arrested three people, including a Palestinian man, at the Rafah border post northeast of Cairo, and seized more than 200 objects dating back to the Pharaonic, Roman and Ottoman periods, it said. Palestinian Omar Hassan Mohammad and the sister of two merchants based in Gaza were arrested when they tried to smuggle across Rafah 145 objects including statues, bowls and bronze and silver engravings. These objects dating to the Pharaonic and Roman periods were concealed in secret compartments in their luggage, Al Ahram said. Another woman was arrested when she tried to smuggle 60 ancient coins from the Roman and Ottoman periods, it added. State prosecutors are currently investigating the case against the suspects, Al Ahram said, without giving details of when the arrests were made.

### Iranian banishes wife for delivering girl

TEHRAN (AFP) — An Iranian man has refused to admit his wife back to their house after learning that she gave birth to a sixth daughter in hospital, a newspaper reported Tuesday. The man made good on threats he made before her delivery that he would not allow her to come back if the baby happened to be a girl, said the woman, identified by her first name Firuzeh. She told a court in the northeastern city of Mashhad where she filed a suit against her husband for breaking their marriage vow that he had refused to visit her at the hospital after learning about the newborn's sex. "My father had to pay the hospital bills and after being released I went straight to my father's house," she said, quoted by Qods newspaper.



Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, accompanied by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, on Tuesday inspects a guard of honour mounted on the occasion of a brief visit to Jordan by the Palestinian leader (photo by Youssef Allan)

## Jordan, PNA agree to give new push to economic ties

(Continued from page 1)

the Palestinian territories.

On Jan. 15, Israel and the Palestinians signed an agreement that paved the way for an Israeli handover of the 80 per cent of the West Bank town of Hebron to the PNA.

It also envisages an Israeli troop withdrawal from rural areas of the West Bank in three phases, ending by August 1998.

King Hussein played a key role in mediating the Israeli-Palestinian agreement.

Crown Prince Hassan told reporters after Tuesday's

talks that he hoped that Jordan and the PNA would reactivate their bilateral agreements.

He emphasised that priority should be given to the restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people, noting that free trade between Jordan and the Palestinian territories could flourish and investments could be expected in a climate of stability and security.

President Arafat thanked King Hussein for his help in concluding the Hebron accord.

The audience was addressed on the Jordanian side by Prime Minister Kabarti,

Royal Court Chief Awn Khasawneh, Director of the National Security Council HRH Prince Talal Ben Mohammad, Minister of Public Works and Housing Abdul Hadi Majali, Minister of Trade and Industry Ali Abul Ragheb, Minister of Information Marwan Muasher, Minister of Administrative Development Kamal Nasser and head of the Jordanian representation office in Gaza Ziad Majali.

The meeting was attended on the Palestinian side by President Arafat's adviser Mahmoud Abbas and other Palestinian officials.

President Arafat and the accompanying delegation were seen off at the airport by Prince Hassan, Mr. Kabarti, Prince Talal Ben Mohammad, the minister of public works and housing and other senior officials.

The King is recuperating after undergoing a minor knee surgery.

Petra said late Tuesday that the King telephoned Mr. Arafat and thanked him for visiting him and wishing him speedy recovery.

The King also reaffirmed Jordan's continued support for the Palestinian people in their struggle for their rights, Petra added.

## Abu Marzouk said to drop battle

(Continued from page 12)

been trying to agree on terms of the group's political participation. Last week, PNA President Yasser Arafat appointed a former Hamas leader, Jalal Sadr, to his cabinet.

Dr. Abu Marzouk was detained reentering the United States in the summer of 1995 when immigration inspectors realised his name had been added to a list of suspected terrorists.

Dr. Abu Marzouk has lived in Virginia for 15 years, but is not a citizen. Israel has agreed to return the bodies of two Palestinians from Hamas, including one killed after kidnapping an Israeli soldier in 1994, a relative said Tuesday.

The relative of Salah Jadallah said Israel would return Jadallah's body, along with

that of Hassan Abbas, another Hamas militant from Gaza, on Wednesday at the border post between Gaza and Israel.

Israeli soldiers killed Jadallah in October 1994 while attempting to free Nachshon Wachsmann, who had been kidnapped by Hamas militants. Wachsmann was also killed in the army raid.

Abbas, who like Jadallah belonged to the Hamas military wing, was killed the same month by police when he opened fire at an open-air cafe in West Jerusalem, killing two civilians.

Israel agreed to return the bodies after Palestinian police convinced Hamas last year to reveal the location of the remains of Ilan Saadun, another kidnapped Israeli soldier. The body was found near Tel Aviv.

## Israeli deputies more amenable

(Continued from page 1)

ring to the coalition agreement between his party and the Likud that affirmed the Third Way's main platform — that the Golan will not be returned to Syria.

Israel-Syria talks stalled 11 months ago, even though Syria and the previous Labour government were close to a deal that would have returned the Golan to Syria in exchange for peace.

Mr. Netanyahu has refused Syria's demand that he resume the talks from where they left off and embrace his predecessors' commitments.

Mr. Netanyahu said Monday he expected a compromise formula to emerge: "I assume that with mutual goodwill and the help of the United States we will reach a formula that will enable the renewal of direct talks ... we will know very soon."

U.S. President Bill Clinton is expected to meet with Mr. Netanyahu and other regional leaders in coming weeks, and there were also other efforts to jump-start the peace process.

In Damascus, European Union (EU) special envoy Miguel Moratinos arrived Monday for a four-day visit after meeting with Israeli leaders.

The U.S. role in the peace process.

Deputy Russian Foreign Minister Victor Posuvaluk was also in Israel Sunday in a bid to invigorate Russia's role in the peace process. He said his country has already sent letters urging the sides to resume negotiations.

Israel's Yediot Ahronot daily said Friday that Foreign Minister Levy recently initiated contacts with Syria with the help of Cyprus and Luxembourg. The paper said the sides were close to a compromise formula that would pave the way for resuming the talks and contain both sides' interpretation of what was achieved so far.

Mr. Netanyahu's office also announced Monday that if the talks with Syria resume Israel's delegation would be supervised by Mr. Levy and Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, both relative moderates.

Damascus said meanwhile a document drawn up by members of the two main Israeli political parties on the final-status talks with the Palestinians is a farce that will block creation of an independent Palestinian state.

"Under this formula, Israel gets its hands on more than 85 per cent of the area of the West Bank while placing the Palestinians residents under its permanent supervision," the government newspaper Tishrin said.

## Sudan claims advance in east

(Continued from page 1)

the foreign factor in the fighting in the east.

"The U.S. embassy's attempt to deny the Ethiopian or Eritrean regime's involvement in the aggression comes in the context of the conspiracy to attack Sudan through its neighbours," the Foreign Ministry statement said.

"(It was like) a political circular issued by a body hostile to the government of Sudan. Issuing such statements will not help clear the air or provide an atmosphere favourable to constructive dialogue," it added.

The U.S. statement last week said: "Sudan's claims of foreign involvement in its civil war are an attempt to distract the Sudanese people and the international community from what is essentially a domestic political crisis."

Sudan has also denied charges by rebels that Iran sent arms to the country.

## Iraq expects delivery in April

(Continued from page 12)

wheat from Australia and Canada; rice from Thailand, Vietnam, Pakistan and the United States; cooking oil from Jordan, Egypt, Malaysia and Turkey; tea from India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and China; and lentils from Turkey, Morocco, Sudan and China.

The government, he said, can only provide baby milk to children one year and younger.

"We want to add those more than one year" after more funds are available, he said.

Mr. Saleh said the oil-rich country — which spent \$250 million per month on food before the Gulf war — would not return to normal until the U.N. sanctions were lifted completely.

The Security Council will not lift the sanctions until the U.N. certifies that Iraq has eliminated all weapons of mass destruction. Iraq blames the U.N. chief weapons inspector, Rolf Ekeus, and the United States for not agreeing to the certification.

"I think Iraq has fulfilled its obligation ... and it's really a crime in the history of mankind to keep 22 million inhabitants under the decisions of Mr. Ekeus and the

United States," Mr. Saleh said. "It's genocide for the Iraqi people."

An Iraqi government newspaper said on Tuesday that several European and Arab airlines were trying to get permission from the U.N. to allow them fly food and medicine to Iraq under an oil-for-food deal.

Al Jumhuriya newspaper quoted Director-General of state-run Iraqi Airways Rabee' Mohammad Saleh, as saying that several airlines had informed him that they had submitted requests to the Sanctions Committee.

"Several international airlines sent telegrams to the Iraqi Airways informing it that they had submitted requests to the United Nations Sanctions Committee to allow them to transport foodstuffs, medicine and other essential goods to Iraq under the oil-for-food deal," the paper said.

Mr. Saleh did not name the companies but said five European and Arab airlines had expressed their readiness to transport humanitarian goods to Iraq under the pact.

He said several others were trying to obtain permission to allow them to resume their passenger flights to Iraq.



## Draft law on competition and anti-monopoly draws sharp criticism from private sector

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A new competition and anti-monopolies draft law approved by the Cabinet and forwarded to Parliament in mid-December continues to draw sharp criticism from the private sector as the bill awaits parliamentary discussion. The problem? Its size, its content, its lack of clarity and its impracticability, the draft's critics say.

The draft is one in a series of new business and investment laws being reviewed by Parliament. Among the new draft laws are the companies and customs laws which are viewed as essential for Jordan's economic progress and its pending accession to the WTO and European partnership agreements. The competition and anti-monopolies law is intended to gear up the private sector for the eventual end to the Ministry of Supply's jurisdiction in price fixing.

Ghazi Kassar, spokesperson for the Amman Chamber of Commerce, said that although the chamber's committee currently reviewing the law hasn't issued a final statement, it has "numerous objections" to the draft.

The language isn't very specific," Mr. Kassar says. "To begin with, we are skeptical of the draft's definition of the word 'monopoly.' The draft states that a monopoly is 'the capability to affect the market.'"

"That's a bit effervescent," says Mr. Kassar.

Many from the private sector have contended that the draft, rather than diminishing government interference in private sector affairs, has actually maintained it in various forms, and has left several loopholes that would allow the government to maintain its own monopolies under certain conditions and for certain periods of time.

A primary objection to the draft is that it stipulates the formation of an nine-member "authority" with powers to see that the law is implemented and the creation of a special court to hear cases of alleged violations of the law. Of the authority's nine members, seven would be from the government, rather than representatives from private sector.

The court "to prevent monopoly according to law", whose two judges will be nominated by the judiciary, may also include the appointment, by the Cabinet, of a third expert specialised in commerce.

"We think that the idea of a 'court' is a bit dubious, since we are not sure from where this court receives its authority," said Mr. Kassar.

The draft also includes various articles that would not allow companies to sell equipment, goods or services below their cost, and that agents must comply in full with all conditions provided by the supplier with regards to pricing and selling.

"This very simply contradicts the notion of a 'free market'," said Ali Dajani, advisor at the Amman Chamber of Industry, "and it is a blatant interference in private sector affairs."

Additionally, the small size of the Jordanian market and the uncertainty of Jordan's future status within the WTO and its pending economic agreement with the European Union under the draft law "superfluous" and premature by many.

"I don't think that our experience justifies this law," said Mr. Dajani. "We don't have numerous companies that could create monopolies in the sense of 'cartels', which is what the law is referring to."

The Jordanian market, can barely accommodate one producer of a certain product, he said, so there is rarely any incentive for other companies to enter the market, therefore, certain companies or producers may enjoy a de facto monopoly.

"Our problem is market manipulation," said Mr. Dajani, "as we saw with the prices of coffee several months ago."

The advisor was making reference to an incident in 1995 when the Ministry of Supply took a decision to float coffee prices in the country after international prices of coffee rose. Importers, in turn, increased their coffee prices even though most coffee on the market or in store at the time had been purchased at lower prices.

A memo from the Chamber of Industry submitted to Ministry of Trade and Industry

makes this claim, and hints that more suitable legislation might include articles that prevent exploitation of consumers through market manipulation.

Also, says Mr. Kassar, Jordan is unsure of the outcome of the EU and the WTO.

"We don't know what the conditions will be, and we have no experience in this," he said, "so we think it may be premature to pass such a law at this time."

## Swiss study: Asian economic miracle can continue for many decades

GENEVA (R) — Asia's "economic miracle" of the past 30 years, the future of which has been questioned as growth in key countries has slowed, could continue for many decades, according to an authoritative Swiss report.

But further advance well into the 21st century will depend on governments pursuing policies that sustain high savings and investment and bring reform to agriculture and services, said the report from the Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS).

"If East Asian nations remain open to competition and technology, and can avoid the pitfalls of heavy social subsidies as their economies mature, an Asian 'miracle' can continue for many decades," it declared.

"High saving and a social commitment to education explain part of the Asian success. They will not quickly fade," the report said.

"Policies that subsidise sunset sectors like agriculture or heavy industry and those that artificially raise labour or capital costs appear more important in explaining slowing productivity growth than any shortage of new technology," the UBS analysts pointed out.

Compiled by analysts at the bank, Switzerland's biggest and a major player on the global financial scene, the report appeared in the latest edition of the UBS English-language magazine, International Finance.

The UBS analysts said their findings cast doubt on suggestions by some prominent econ-

## Algeria earns \$12.5b from oil, gas exports

PARIS (R) — The value of Algeria's exports of oil and gas rose by 29 per cent to \$12.5 billion in 1996 from the year before, Energy and Mining Minister Amar Makhloufi has told the state-run radio.

Energy officials said the rise was mainly due to higher international oil prices.

Mr. Makhloufi, who was not asked to comment on the reasons for the higher exports, said Algeria earned an average \$21.5 per barrel in 1996 against a budgeted average of \$16-\$17 per barrel.

Algeria's oil and gas exports were worth \$9.7 billion in 1995 against \$8.5 billion, according to official figures. The government has fore-

cast \$538 million of non-oil and gas exports for 1996 compared with \$350 million in the previous year.

Algeria has forecast \$16 billion in receipts from oil and gas exports by the year 2000, thanks mostly to increased gas exports.

According to another report, Algeria's oil and gas sectors grew by 6.5 per cent in 1996 but official figures showed that production in the North African country generally fell, with one sector showing a 36 per cent drop.

"The industrial production for 1996 was distinguished by an acute deterioration, except for the hydrocarbon sectors and to a lesser extent, building

materials," said the Algerian government in a report carried by the official Algerian news agency APS.

The rise in production in the energy sector peaked with the 8.6 increase in the liquefied natural gas sector, the report said. Officials have said that Algerian oil and gas exports in 1996 accounted for more than 94 per cent of the North African OPEC member's foreign earnings.

Algeria's total exports in the first three quarters of 1996 were \$8.49 billion compared with \$6.76 billion for the same period last year, according to the latest official data.

Production in the non-oil and gas industrial sectors — over-

whelmingly covering state-owned industries — dropped by 36 per cent in the textile industry to 0.2 in the production of welding materials. The second worst hit industry was iron and steel, which slumped by 29 per cent, the figures showed.

But a boost in the agricultural sector helped Algeria reduce its imports of cereals, with a record harvest of 4.6 million tonnes in 1996 compared with 2.13 million the previous year, the report added.

The government has pumped more than 600 billion dinars (\$11 billion) into the ailing state-owned industrial companies in the past six years to try to rescue jobs.

## HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) Get to work fixing up your home today, however don't invite anyone in to visit until the process is completed. Avoid becoming involved in a disagreement between a family member and an outsider or there could be difficulty.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) Take time out from your routines today to labour on your appearance so that you present a favourable impression. Plan some amusements later this evening which will lift your spirits and make your loved ones happy.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) Labour on establishing more harmony at home with your ones and there will be peace and contentment present. Don't take any risks if you go out with your mate this evening. Put pleasures aside at this time and be practical.

**MOON CHILDREN:** (June 22 to July 21) Leave home early today and get started on shopping and visiting, however only for constructive purposes. Be well-prepared with data for some important writing and thereby you can become quite successful.

**LEO:** (July 22 to August 21) Drive carefully today, while on the highway and be sure to count your change when shopping, so that you will have sufficient funds. Do something to improve your budget and postpone a visit at this time to see friends.

**VIRGO:** (August 22 to September 22) Don't allow yourself to become confused today over monetary affairs and you can eliminate any difficulty. Use your fine sense of humour to please some good friends later this evening. Carefully consider your situation before acting.

**LIBRA:** (September 23 to October 22) It would be wise to listen to suggestions from a superior today since your ideas are not as fruitful. Be sure your mate agrees with your plans for a splurge later this evening or there could be much difficulty.

**SCORPIO:** (October 23 to November 21) Don't permit anyone to involve you in a crooked scheme today, or you could get into a great deal of difficulty. Get out socially with good friends and you can all have fun together tonight.

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) A close friend could unwittingly give you the wrong advice today, so don't rush blindly into anything until you study every situation. Plan carefully this evening before introducing your mate around to avoid any embarrassing situation.

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 20) Don't try to wrench a favour from a superior today, however join a fellow associate at some new kind of activity which will be successful. You may be forgettable at this time, so jot down notes on important matters.

**AQUARIUS:** (January 21 to February 19) Avoid a new contact today who has an eye on your assets, and keep busy with those who are helpful to you. Do something nice for your mate, however be practical about it and don't be extravagant on the price.

**PISCES:** (February 20 to March 20) Forget those daily routines, and find some new activity today which can bring you advancement. A little risk later this evening may work out fine, however be sure not to push your luck and defeat your objectives.

Birthstone of January: Garnet — Rose Quartz

## REUTERS

## REUTERS

### The Business of Information

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.6487	0.8203	1.4281	121.13	1.3388	1616.90	1.8514	5.5808	
DM Mark	0.6085	1.0000	0.3757	0.8662	73.46	0.8115	980.26	1.1232	3.3726
GB Sterling	1.6122	2.6578	1.0000	2.3031	194.82	2.1581	2607.41	2.3862	8.9573
CH Franc	0.7002	1.1532	0.4338	1.0000	84.82	0.9367	1131.02	1.2958	3.6899
JP Yen	0.0083	1.3594	0.5109	1.1772	1.0000	1.1035	13.33	152.63	4.5843
CA Dollar	0.7470	1.2257	0.4526	1.0675	1.10	1.0000	1194.00	1.3788	4.1345
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0190	0.3829	0.8882	1335.65	0.8271	1.1035	11.44	3.4360
NL Guilder	0.5401	88.97	0.3344	77.10	85.42	0.7222	672.40	1.0000	3.0003
FR Franc	0.1798	0.2964	0.1114	25.6705	21.78	0.2406	33.28	33.2800	

Oil	Last	Previous
Brent	22.20	22.95
WTI	22.98	23.80
Bony	23.20	22.95
Dubai	20.27	20.28
UL Gas	210.00	205.00

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2687	0.4399	0.18335	0.38104	32.3447
AE Dirham	0.2724	0.4484	0.18896	0.38932	33.3498
KW Dinar	3.3074	5.45554	2.05086	4.7259	401.123
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.37637	1.84501	3.79076	321.75
CY Pound	2.017	3.326	1.25	2.8803	244.4

Metal	Bid	Offer
Gold (oz's)	353	353.5
Silver (oz's)	4.97	4.99
Platinum (oz's)	387.55	388.55
AL (3 Months)	1628	1630
CU (3 Months)	2241	2242
ZINC (3 Months)	1129	1130
Lead (3 Months)	676	677
Ni (3 Months)	7280	7285

Period	1	3	6	9	12
Ony Month	Months	Months	Months	Months	Year
USD	5.27	5.42	5.52	5.50	5.58
GBP	6.65	6.15	6.33	6.37	6.58
JPY	0.43	0.46	0.46	0.52	0.53
DEM	3.08	3.05	3.07	3.09	3.12
FRF	3.23	3.23	3.23	3.23	3.25
CHF	1.78	1.72	1.53	1.58	1.57
ITL	7.35	7.16	6.88	6.65	6.51

Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Pt Ch
New York DOW JONES	6754.59	93.9	1.41	6760.37	6663	6660.69
New York S&P 500	776.13	11.11	1.45	776.23	765.02	765.02
London FT-SE 100	4237.4	25.4	0.6	4238.3	4191.3	4212
Tokyo Nikkei 225	17796.57	481.67	2.69	17796.6	17195.3	17324.9
Paris CAC 40	2482.76	47.59	1.85	2484.28	2431.72	2435.17
Frankfurt DAX	2889.33	5.2	0.17	2893.43	2884.06	2894.53

Commodity	Last	Delivery
Coffee (c/lbs)	140.57	Spot
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1339	Spot
Sugar (\$/ton)	301.2	Spot
Wheat (\$/ton)	133	Spot
Soy (c/lbs)	22.86	Spot
Tea (\$/lb)	115	Spot
Barley (\$/bsh)	2.15	Spot
Rice (\$/ton)	470	Spot

Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1417	1.1474
DE Mark	0.4281	0.4302
CH Franc	0.4932	0.4957
FR Franc	0.127	0.1276
JP Yen	0.5888	0.5915
NL Guilder	0.351	0.3529
IT Lira	0.4208	0.4243

\* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

## THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS

- What's for dinner
- The World According to
- Viewpoint
- Its capital
- Muscat
- Sector
- Male voice
- Military acronym
- Vertical airfoils
- nous (confidentially)
- List ender
- Hourglass and scythe toter
- Moon goddess
- Ment
- avis
- Entertainer Reynolds
- Myron or William
- Passport endorsement
- Artist Bonheur
- Soul
- Envelope abbr.
- One who loves excessively
- Beige
- Killer whale
- Merman or Waters
- Actor Liam
- Interlock
- Smile
- German songs
- Recipient of two mules
- Actor's quest
- Matriculate
- Toolbox item
- Streamlet
- Muse of lync poetry
- Being
- Toward shelter
- Senior member
- Hollow stem
- Actress Daly

by Eugene Puffenberger

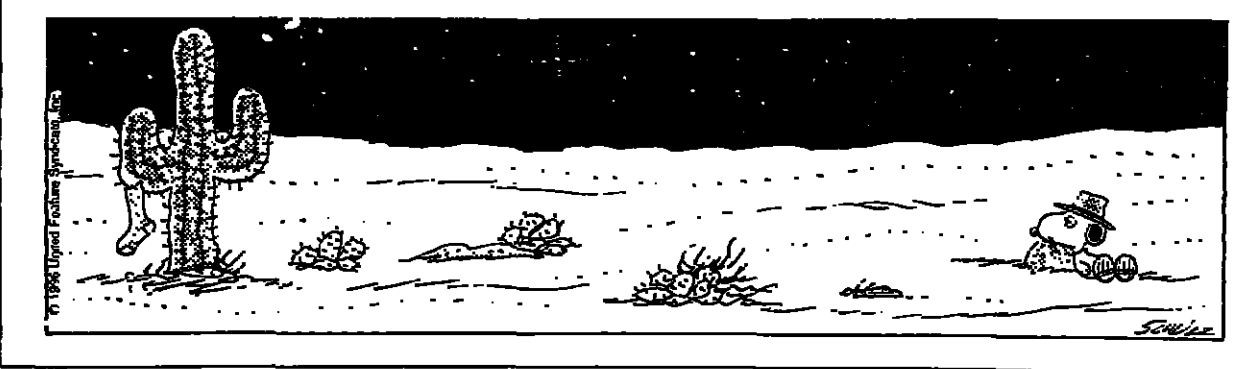
WRONG MAN CHIER  
HAVEA ONES HALLO  
ATEAM TEXT ASKS  
MAR BLOWTORCHES  
DRIER RAH  
CARETS BEARABLE  
ARABS SURGE RUN  
REFS SERGE VENO  
TNY SEANS SIEGE  
EASINESS AMAZED  
NOS SWALE  
WINDBREAKER WOK  
EDIE ELLE TRADE  
DONE DATE LAYIN  
SLED NOT YESES

10 Fast time?  
11 Against  
12 Average  
13 Corner  
14 Wagner's earth goddess  
15 "Peter Pan" dog  
16 Assort  
17 Movie set at V.M.I.  
18 Two  
19 Enlightened words?  
20 Nobleman  
21 City on the Orme  
22 Single time  
23 Take on  
24 Lid. counterpart  
25 Con game  
26 Mr. Amaz

44 Lollapalooza  
45 Actress Marie  
46 Walking on air  
47 Fall flower  
48 Postponement  
49 Chapeau's place  
50 Subterfuge

56 U.S. Grant  
57 opponent  
58 Lacquer box  
59 Postponement  
60 Chapeau's place  
61 Subterfuge

## Peanuts



## Andy Capp



## Mutt'n' Jeff



## Business

## Hilton makes bid for ITT

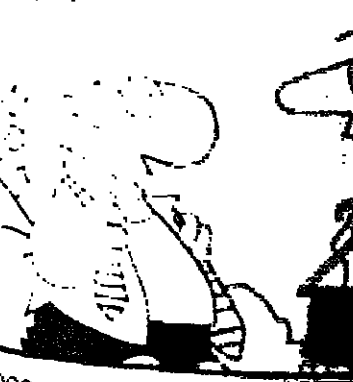
Hilton Hotels Inc. has made a formal bid to acquire ITT Hotels Inc., a move that would create a new giant in the hotel industry. The bid, valued at \$1.5 billion, was made public Tuesday. Hilton, based in New York, has been in talks with ITT for some time. The deal would combine Hilton's 1,200 hotels with ITT's 1,000 hotels, creating a company with over 2,200 hotels worldwide. The bid is subject to regulatory approval and a shareholder vote.

## adi outlines plans, results

adi, a leading manufacturer of athletic shoes, has outlined its plans for the future. The company, based in Italy, has announced a series of initiatives to expand its global presence. These include opening new manufacturing facilities in Asia and Europe, as well as launching new product lines. adi also reported strong financial results for the previous year, with a significant increase in sales and profit. The company's stock price has risen steadily since the announcement.

At a large press conference, adi's CEO outlined the company's vision for the future. He emphasized the company's commitment to innovation and quality. He also announced a series of partnerships with major retailers and distributors. The CEO stated that adi was confident in its ability to achieve its goals and create long-term value for its shareholders.

## THE BETTER HALF



JUMBLE

LUDEE  
PRUSN  
VOMITE  
RAKNEC

WHAT YEAH'S  
FINISH CO  
THE TWO

Answer here: A



## Hilton makes \$6.5b bid for ITT Corp.

NEW YORK (AP) — Hilton Hotels Corp. launched a hostile offer Monday to buy ITT Corp., owner of the Sheraton Hotel chain and Madison Square Garden, for \$6.5 billion.

The bid marks a turn for ITT, which had once been a voracious acquirer of companies and came to typify the idea of a conglomerate. Just over a year ago the company pared back to focus on entertainment like casinos, hotels and sports franchises.

Hilton said in a statement it made its offer by telephone early in the day and confirmed it in writing. ITT had no immediate response.

Hilton, which also operates casinos including the Flamingo Hilton in Las Vegas, plans to assume about \$4 billion in debt as part of the deal, bringing its total value to \$10.5 billion.

## UAE investors buy Beirut Sheraton property

BEIRUT (AFP) — Businessmen from the United Arab Emirates have bought the property of the Sheraton Hotel on Beirut's seafront from a Lebanese private company, one of the firm's shareholders has told AFP.

Adnan Tabbara refused to reveal the value of the deal, struck by members of Dubai's ruling Al Maktoum family and which the London-based Arab newspaper Asharq Al Awsat put at \$53 million.

The daily said the purchase of the 7,000 square metre property has brought the price of the square metre in the Manara seaside area to a record of \$8,200.

True values of real-estate transactions in Lebanon are not usually disclosed, allowing investors to declare lower prices to avoid high taxes.

The construction of the Beirut Sheraton was forced to stop because of the 1975-1990 civil war. The unfinished building was successively occupied by militias and Syrian troops.

## Iraq negotiating post-embargo oil contracts

NICOSIA (AFP) — Iraq is arranging contracts with Russian, Indian, Malaysian and Chinese companies for oil exploration and production after any lifting of the U.N. embargo, the weekly Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) reported Monday.

Iraq has already initiated an agreement with Malaysia's Petronas for exploration and production in one of eight blocs in the southwest of the country between the Euphrates River and the borders with Jordan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Russia's Lukoil said Wednesday in Moscow it would sign a \$3.8 billion contract to participate in the development of the West Qurna field in southern Iraq, the largest field in the country with reserves estimated at 19 billion barrels of oil.

Surface facilities at the field were "badly damaged and pillaged in early 1991 following desert storm," the weekly newsletter said, referring to the U.S.-led campaign which ousted Iraqi troops from Kuwait in the Gulf war.

Once the agreement is signed, the Lukoil-led consortium, which includes Zarubezhneft and Machinimport, could let other foreign firms handle some parts of the project, according to MEES, which is published in Nicosia.

MEES also said negotiations between Baghdad and an Indian consortium have reached an advanced stage on jointly developing a bloc of the southeastern Halfa field whose reserves are estimated at four billion barrels, with a potential production capacity of 220,000 barrels a day.

The consortium includes the Indian state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Commission and privately owned Reliance Industries Ltd.

## U.S. oil firms seek exploration deal in Jordan

AMMAN (R) — U.S. oil firms Huber Exploration and Medallion Exploration are jointly negotiating with Jordan to explore in a 5,000 square kilometre area near the border with Saudi Arabia, an official said Tuesday.

Khalid Al Shayab, director of Jordan's Natural Resources Authority, said he expected the two firms to clinch the accord to explore the concession in the Sarhan area next month.

Mr. Shayab told Reuters the U.S. firms had arrived at an initial agreement on general principles of the terms of the deal with Jordan, including agreement on oil and gas production sharing.

But he declined to say how much money the companies would be committed to invest and how many exploration wells they would drill under the expected agreement.

Two other U.S. firms, Anadarko Petroleum Corp. and Trans Global Resources, who signed production sharing accords last year, were getting ready to develop their concessions, Mr. Shayab said.

Trans Global Resources has an eight-year concession to drill for oil in the Dead Sea and Wadi Araba region. Jordan's deal with Anadarko commits the U.S. firm to spend \$20 million in a 17,000 square kilometre area in the northeastern region.

Jordan does not produce oil in commercial quantities but produces 850,000 cubic metres of gas daily for electricity generation.

## Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

### Qadi outlines AJIB plans, results

THE ARABIAN INVESTMENT BANK (AJIB) to distribute half a share to shareholders float five shares for subscription with a strategy to raise the bank's capital from \$1 million to \$20 million to meet the requirements of the Central Bank before the end of this year.

The plan to raise the capital was announced by AJIB deputy chairman Hani Al Qadi when he unveiled that the bank was able to boost net profit last year by six per cent to JD2.6 million. He indicated that most of the banks, including AJIB, have posted mid-year results in 1996 that were lower than what were recorded during the same period of 1995 but "the AJIB registered positive results in the second half of 1996 and the situation was adjusted in the year-end figures which reflected a six per cent profit growth."

Mr. Qadi revealed that a large portion of the profit came from the bank's foreign investments as the AJIB owns and manages investment portfolios in Jordan and abroad. He said that credit facilities increased by 13.5 per cent and assets by four per cent as they reached JD69 million and JD224 million respectively at the end of 1996. Mr. Qadi boasted that the bank enjoyed high liquidity to enable it to meet all financing requirements and noted that the capital adequacy ratio has reached 30 per cent, much higher than the 10 per cent ratio specified by the Central Bank.

The senior AJIB official said that deposits increased by four per cent having climbed to JD196 million. He added that sharp competition among licensed banks in Jordan to attract deposits has caused a high rise in interest rates which, consequently raised the cost of money for the banks. He claimed that deposits at banks did not actually grow as the slight growth rate of the deposits was mainly due to interests accumulating on the deposits at various banks (Al Aswaq).

## Swiss investment boom expected in Egypt in 1997

CAIRO (AFP) — Three giant Swiss firms are set to make an investment offensive in Egypt in 1997 to bolster overall Swiss business in the country by nearly 25 per cent, a spokesman for the Swiss embassy here has said.

Swiss investment in Egypt will jump from the current \$1.03 billion to \$1.32 billion, a 23 per cent increase described as "quite exceptional" by the Swiss diplomat.

According to the embassy there are 83 Swiss firms in Egypt — many of them joint ventures — employing nearly 10,000 people.

Three companies — Holderbank, Nestle and ABB — are to enter the country this year or to expand their existing business activities.

Holderbank has signed a deal with the Egyptian firm Orascom to build a cement factory in the northern city of Suez at an estimated cost of 1.2 billion pounds (\$400 million), the diplomat said.

The factory is expected to begin operations at the end of 1997.

Holderbank and Orascom will each own 40 per cent of the factory with the remaining 20 per cent held by Egyptian banks and private investors.

"The most astonishing thing is that the Holderbank majority shareholder, the Schmidheiny family, which built cement factories at Helwan (near Cairo) at the turn of the century, had vowed never to return to Egypt after they were nationalised in 1961," the diplomat said.

Nestle, which has been operating in Egypt for eight years, is also planning to bolster investment here "substantially in 1997 but the total cost of the investment will remain secret until the deal is finalised," the diplomat added.

The giant food manufacturer owns three factories in Egypt making ice cream and soup and has already invested 80 million pounds (\$24 million).

The Swiss subsidiary of ABB, a Swiss-Swedish electrical engineering giant, also has "huge projects slated for 1997 in Egypt, where it already owns five factories, employs 1,500 people and has invested \$300 million."

Meanwhile, two big names in Swiss banking — Union des Banques Suisses (UBS) and Societe des Banques Suisses (SBS) — are planning to join Credit Suisse in Egypt.

The economic crisis in Switzerland is forcing Swiss firms to seek business abroad and privatisation in Egypt is encouraging them to come here, the diplomat said.

"The number of potential consumers in Egypt climbed from five million a decade ago to 15 million today," he added.

Switzerland is the third largest investor in Egypt. The United States and Britain hold first and second place respectively while Panama comes in third position because a large number of Egyptian expatriates use it to channel investment back home.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
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ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR TUESDAY 28/01/1997											
PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	PAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	PERCENT
261.000	205.000	ARAB BANK	14.0	1.37	3	140	35770	255.50	255.50	-	-
1.210	.880	MID. EAST INV. BK.	75.5	0.00	2	700	807	1.16	1.15	-.01	-.1
2.700	1.120	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	5.3	0.05	5	1850	4255	2.30	2.30	-	-
2.350	2.250	THE HOUSING BK.	12.5	2.96	2	1000	4670	4.68	4.67	-.01	-.2
2.950	2.440	JOR. KULAIT BANK	19.6	0.00	2	99	265	2.72	2.71	-.01	-.4
1.090	.880	JOR. GULF BANK	5.8	7.22	11	24100	23771	.81	.81	-	-
4.180	3.480	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	18.1	0.01	1	50	188	3.78	3.76	-.02	-.5
BANK SECTOR TOTALS											
2.830	1.830	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	5.4	10.42	1	100	192	1.93	1.92	-.01	-.1
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS											
1.830	1.450	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	11.0	7.55	26	35110	59970	1.61	1.59	-.02	-.1
1.600	1.080	NATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	15	6950	8218	1.20	1.19	-.01	-.1
1.720	1.130	ARAB INV. INV. EDUC.	14.3	8.52	1	700	253	3.85	3.82	-.03	-.8
1.120	.960	NARQA EDUCATION	9	0.00	6	6800	7072	1.05	1.04	-.01	-.1
2.250	1.690	UNIFIED CO.	11.1	4.76	8	7500	15765	2.11	2.10	-.01	-.5
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS											
3.730	3.060	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	19.6	2.92	8	1284	4185	3.42	3.42	-	-
3.500	2.710	JOR. PHOSPHATE WIRTS	35.7	0.00	2	650	2158	3.35	3.32	-.03	-.9
10.400	8.720	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.0	8.08	2	300	2970	9.98	9.90	-.08	-.8
7.300	6.250	JORDAN TANNING	6.7	5.76	2	60	375	6.25	6.25	-	-
7.950	6.420	JOR. WOODYD WILLS	8.9	3.60	1	1000	6950	6.95	6.95	-	-
4.580	3.940	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	19.8	5.54	14	2718	9796	3.63	3.61	-.02	-.6
6.600	5.650	JOR. CERAMIC IND.	8.2	3.79	4	600	3868	6.60	6.60	-	-
2.710	1.570	JOR. PIPES MANFCT.	8.9	7.50	7	350	560	1.60	1.60	-	-
7.350	4.250	DAR ALDAMA DV. INV.	12.6	4.33	5	900	4147	4.68	4.62	-.06	-.1
5.800	3.130	ARAB ALUM. IND.	8.8	8.45	2	500	1275	3.55	3.55	-	-
.860	.450	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	8.9	0.00	10	6750	4055	.61	.61	-	-
1.920	.540	INTL. CABLE WIRE-MFAC	14.3	0.00	3	22500	52675	2.46	2.35	-.11	-.5
1.240	.670	JOR. SULPHUR-CHEM	9	0.00	5	1700	1394	.82	.82	-	-
1.670	1.080	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	26.4	0.00	2	1850	2170	1.40	1.41	.01	.7
3.130	1.440	UNIV. MOOD. INDOS.	5.1	11.90	1	250	420	1.68	1.68	-	-
1.930	1.140	JOR. INV. RESOURCES	16.4	0.00	4	1350	1756	1.30	1.31	.01	.8
1.130	.590	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	28.3	0.00	43	32950	13409	.92	.92	-	-
1.380	1.080	INTL. TOBACCO	29.6	0.00	5	2050	2565	1.26	1.26	-	-
1.540	.930	UNION CR. & VEG.	24.6	0.00	4	950	950	1.00	1.00	-	-
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS											
GRAND TOTAL											
INDEX: 116.03 CHNG: -0.23 132 87014 139714											
INDEX: 153.39 CHNG: -0.09 215 172113 298789											

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"My boss wants my report on his desk at 9:00, so I hired some guys to steal his desk at 8:00."

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Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

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PRUSN

VOMITE

RAKNEC

Should suit acquaintance be...

WHAT THE NEW YEAR'S EVE REVEALERS CONSIDERED THE TIPSY SINGER

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: A

Yesterday's Jumbles: LYING JUMBO SQUALL INHALE  
Answer: Flowers can make this bloom - A BIG SMILE

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## Gascoigne in doubt for World Cup qualifier against Italy

GLASGOW (AFP) — England and Rangers midfielder Paul Gascoigne was to undergo an X-ray for an ankle injury that could put him in doubt for the World Cup clash against Italy in February.

Gascoigne was flown back to Glasgow on Monday night after damaging his ankle in a collision with Ajax goalkeeper Edwin van der Sar in the European six-a-side tournament in Amsterdam.

The player needed crutches to help him limp away from the Dutch capital and the Ajax club immediately scheduled an X-ray on his left leg.

Even if there is no break, the injury appeared serious, and with England coach Glen Hoddle naming his 22-man squad for the Wembley clash with Cesare Maldini's new-look Azzurri on Thursday it was the last thing he needed.

Gascoigne's injury was the second massive blow of the day for Hoddle, who could be without as many as seven likely choices.

Tottenham striker Teddy Sheringham was ruled out of the Italy equation when he broke down on the first day back in training after his ankle injury.

Sheringham limped away part-way through the session and Spurs boss Gerry Francis admitted: "It's bad news for England and it's not too good for me either. I know it would be nice to see him playing for England and for me. Unfortunately these things happen."

Sheringham's absence means Hoddle is definitely without three men, with for-



Glasgow Rangers forward Paul Gascoigne (R) duels for the ball with Ajax defender Danny Blind during the first stage of the Euro 6's - six-a-side soccer tournament in Amsterdam. Ajax won the opening match 6-2 (Reuters photo)

mer skipper David Platt (hamstring) and Everton wing-back Andy Hinchcliffe (cruciate ligaments) also missing.

Another Spurs man, Darren Anderton, yet to play for Hoddle, made his first steps along the recovery road by playing 45 minutes of a practice match yesterday, but is nowhere near match-fit after his knee problem.

The news got slightly better for Hoddle on Tuesday morning when Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson said he hoped Beckham could be fit enough to play against

Wimbledon Wednesday. But with Beckham's United team-mate Phil Neville still recovering from glandular fever, Hoddle's options are growing increasingly limited for a game in which victory would make England red-hot favourites to qualify for France 98 by right.

## Dane Olsen takes up new challenge at Ajax

COPENHAGEN (R) — Morten Olsen, the former Danish international who is to replace Louis Van Gaal as coach of Ajax Amsterdam next season, is a passionate perfectionist with clear ideas on how soccer should be played.

"Football should not just be result-oriented," the Belgium-based coach told Reuters in a telephone interview. "The game has gone off at the wrong tangent in recent years. Far too many trainers practise excessively defensive and cautious strategies."

"It is not just a question of winning, it is the way you do it. As a coach I want to be able to sit back and enjoy my team playing good, positive soccer."

"I want to work with a club with the right philosophy, a place where football is alive."

Ajax certainly fit that bill despite their poor league form this season.

They became European champions in 1995 and were beaten finalists last season, playing fluent exciting football with an exciting young side nur-

tured by the hugely successful Van Gaal.

But their appointment of Olsen is something of a surprise.

The 47-year-old performed illustriously on the football pitch, playing a record 102 games for Denmark, but his managerial career has so far been mixed.

As coach at top Danish side Brøndby, where he was in charge for two years, Olsen crafted a side which reached the semifinals of the UEFA Cup — the best achievement of a Danish club in European competition.

In 1992 he moved to German side Cologne. After four seasons in charge and without a trophy to his name he was sacked in late 1995.

Shortly before his appointment at Ajax Olsen told Danish television he wanted to become a leading club trainer again after an 18-month period in the cold.

Olsen is still something of a hero in Denmark, despite his absence from the domestic football scene since 1989.

He began his playing career at Vordingborg, before moving to Nykøbing, both in south-west Denmark, and then to Cercle Brugge, racing white Derek Molenbeek and Anderlecht in Belgium before ending his career as a player at Cologne.

He became captain of the Danish national team in 1983, contributing to Denmark's first ever qualification for the European Championship in France in 1984.

He captained Denmark at the Mexico World Cup in 1986, helping to place the team firmly among the world football elite.

His swansong with the Danes was a 4-0 victory over Brazil in a friendly in Copenhagen in 1989, in which he scored from a penalty.

Olsen's club performances abroad were also distinguished.

While he was at Anderlecht they twice won the Belgian championship and in 1983 won the UEFA Cup by beating Benfica 1-0.

## Davenport shows gold medal form in Tokyo

TOKYO (AFP) — Olympic champion Lindsay Davenport powered her way past Taiwan's No. 1 Wang Shi-ting in the first round of the ATP women's tennis tournament here Tuesday.

The 20-year-old from California, runner-up at the \$965,000 tournament here two years ago, took the first five games in a row on her way to a 6-1, 6-2 victory.

"It's a very fast court. Luckily, we had three days to practice and I felt I hit the ball very well today," said Davenport, the World No. 9.

Wang double-faulted on important points — giving the American break points in the second and fourth games and another on the American's advantage point to go down 2-3 in the second set.

Wang had four break points throughout the match, but each time, Davenport forced an error to save them and wrapped up the 50-minute match when Wang hit another forehand too long.

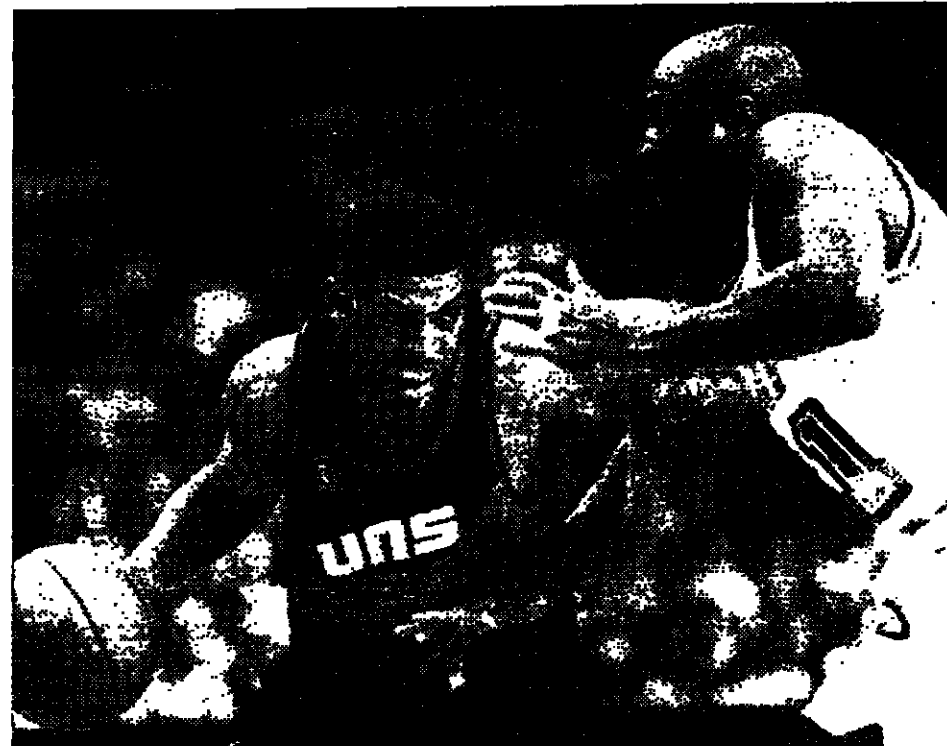
Thai wild card entrant Tamasugarn earned a re-match against Davenport when she defeated Australian Open doubles champion Natasha Zvereva 6-2, 6-1.

The 19-year-old Thai advanced to the Australian Open third round to move up to her career highest at 57th, but crashed to Davenport taking only one game off the American.

Dutch power-server Brenda Schultz-MacCarthy, the eighth seed, had a tough time beating Ruxandra Dragomir of Romania 5-7, 6-4, 6-2, while Japan's No. 1 Ai Sugiyama struggled to beat French qualifier Alexia Dechaume-Balleret 7-6 (7/2), 6-7 (2/7), 6-4.

In other matches, American Kimberly Po downed Katarina Stutenkova of Slovakia 6-4, 6-1, while compatriot Lisa Raymond edged past Seda Noorlander of the Netherlands 7-5, 6-7 (3/7), 7-5.

Gloria Pizzichini of Italy was a 7-6 (7/4), 4-6, 7-6 (7/5) winner over Japan's Rika Hiraki.



Phoenix Suns point guard Kevin Johnson (L) tries to dribble around Miami Heat guard Voshon Lenard January 27. The Heat won 125-97 (Reuters photo)

## Heat erupt to beat Suns 125-97

MIAMI (R) — Alonzo Mourning scored 10 of his 20 points in the first quarter as the Miami Heat posted their most points of the season in their first home victory over the Phoenix Suns, 125-97 Monday.

Tim Hardaway had 21 points and 10 assists for the Heat, who never trailed and shattered their previous season high of 111, set in double overtime at Sacramento on November 22nd.

"We shot 63 per cent. Man, somewhere along the way we've got to bottle that," Miami coach Pat Riley said. "The best thing about the whole game was that we bounced back from a tough loss yesterday (at New York). It was a great win."

"That was just a good old-fashioned spanking," Suns coach Danny Ainge said. "They were good. We couldn't stop them in the post. Their 63 percent was just a direct

result of us not playing tough defence."

Loren Meyer had 18 points for the Suns, who had won their first nine visits to Miami arena.

At Golden State, Latrell Sprewell had 33 points and 11 assists and Joe Smith added 30 points to lead the Golden State Warriors a 122-97 victory over the Vancouver Grizzlies.

The Warriors made 20 consecutive free throws and finished 35-for-37 from the foul line.

Rookie Shareef Abdur-Rahim scored 22 points and Anthony Peeler added 21 for the Grizzlies, who have lost five straight and 15 of their last 17 games. Vancouver fell to 0-2 under new coach Stu Jackson.

## Philippoussis ruled out of Davis Cup tie

SYDNEY (R) — Australia's hopes of upsetting holders France in the Davis Cup first round next month suffered a blow Tuesday when top singles player Mark Philippoussis was ruled out because of injury.

Philippoussis has failed to recover from the tendinitis in his right forearm that forced his withdrawal before the start of this month's Australian Open in Melbourne.

Sandon Stolle was called into the squad as Philippoussis' replacement to face the French on grass at white city in Sydney.

"It was too risky to try Philippoussis' arm (in a) best-of-five set matches on grass," Newcombe said.

"You go out and try to play too early on an arm injury and it could put you out for a long time. He's obviously pretty disappointed but he's just hoping that it's not something that's going to linger," Newcombe said.

Stolle, ranked 52 in the world, joined Pat Rafter and doubles specialists Mark Woodforde and Todd Woodbridge in the squad for the match between February 7-9.

Jason Stoltenberg, a semifinalist on grass at last year's Wimbledon, is also unavailable for the tie because of a wrist injury.

"I think this match is a really honest 50-50 call," Newcombe said. "France are the defending champions — they're going to fight like tigers to protect that."

France, who beat Sweden 3-2 to win the Davis Cup last month, will choose their four-man team from Guy Forget, Cedric Pioline, Arnaud Boetsch, Guillaume Raoux and Lionel Roux.

## Zoff to manage Lazio for now

ROME (AFP) — Ajax Amsterdam's Louis Van Gaal and Sampdoria's Blackburn-bound coach Sven Goran Eriksson are being tipped to take over next season at Lazio, after the sacking of Zdenek Zeman.

Club president Dino

Zoff, who coached Lazio from 1990 to 1994 before moving up to the boardroom, will manage the side until the end of the season and try to haul them out of a crisis.

Last weekend's 2-1 home defeat to Bologna left Lazio ever closer to the relegation zone, after a season of failure in UEFA and Italian Cup competition.

Among the possible candidates being tipped for the permanent job at the helm of Lazio are Van Gaal, who has long made it clear he wants to leave Ajax Amsterdam at the end of the season. Eriksson is similarly

leaving Sampdoria, although his current destination is Premiership strugglers Blackburn Rovers, while another option is Claudio Ranieri, whose days are believed to be numbered at Fiorentina.

Another possibility is Zoff himself. Italy's legendary goalkeeper and member of the 1982 world cup winning squad.

The 54-year-old did not achieve great things with Lazio, but he guided Juventus to Italian Cup and UEFA Cup success during his two seasons from 1988-90.

### GOREN BRIDGE

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#### WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:

AKS Q72 0A QJ92 AKJ54

The bidding has proceeded: SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

10 Pass 10 Pass

What do you bid now?

Q.2 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

AKJ73 QAS 0A QJ92 AKS

The bidding has proceeded: SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

10 Pass 10 Pass

What do you bid now?

Q.3 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:

AKS QJ92 AKS QJ92

Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What do you bid now?

Q.4 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:

AKS QJ92 AKS QJ92

The bidding has proceeded: NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST

10 Pass 10 Pass

What action do you take?

AKS Q72 0A QJ92 AKJ54

The bidding has proceeded: SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

10 Pass 10 Pass

What do you bid now?

Q.5 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

AKS Q72 0A QJ92 AKJ54

The bidding has proceeded: NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST

10 Pass 10 Pass

What do you bid now?

Q.6 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:

AKS Q72 0A QJ92 AKJ54

The bidding has proceeded: NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST

10 Pass 10 Pass

What action do you take?

Look for answers on Monday.

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The theatre opens on the Ramadan Holiday with the new play entitled Amen.. Ya Ho

NEW YORK (AP) — The Super Bowl XXXI was the highest rated telecast in history, with an estimated 93 million viewers tuning in to watch the Packers over the Rams on Monday night.

The Packers won the game 21-17, with Brett Favre leading the team to victory. The game was a defensive battle, with both teams committing many turnovers.

The Super Bowl XXXI was the first to be held in a stadium that was not the home of one of the competing teams. The game was held at the Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans.

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## enge at Ajax

He began his playing career at... before moving to... Both in... and... He became captain of the... national team in 1983... Denmark's first ever qualification... in the European Championship... in 1984... He captained Denmark at the... World Cup in 1995... helping... place the team third... among the... players at... He won the... in 1983... and in 1985... won the... Cup... beating Benfica...



tries to dribble around Miami... 125-97 (Reuters photo)

## at Suns 125-97

soft of us not playing... he had won their... At Golden State... and 17... points to lead the... 122-97 victory... The Warriors... and... Rookie... and... who have... their last... under new coach...

## s ruled out Cup tie

my holders... today... tournament... said... at best... an anti... that he... d... and... at last... 50 all... like... Davis... alone...

**Nabil & Nishami's Theatre**

The theatre opens on the... Ramadan Holiday... with the new play... Amen.. Ya Ho

## Super Bowl XXXI was 4th most-watched

**NEW YORK (Agencies)** — Super Bowl XXXI was the highest-rated telecast in Fox Network history and the fourth most-watched Super Bowl of all time, the network said on Monday.

The 35-21 victory by the Green Bay Packers over the New England Patriots on Sunday received a 43.3 national household rating and a 65 share, with an estimated 128.9 million people watching all or part of the game.

"I've always said the Super Bowl would be a defining moment for the Fox Network," Fox sports president David Hill said. "Given the ratings performance, that's exactly the way it turned out."

The only Super Bowls with larger audiences than Super Bowl XXXI were Super Bowl XXX (Dallas-Pittsburgh) with 138.5 million Super Bowl XXVIII (Dallas-Buffalo) with 134.8 million and Super Bowl XXVII (Dallas-Buffalo) with 133.4 million.

Fox's previous most-watched programme was the NFC championship between Dallas and San Francisco on Jan. 15, 1995, which drew an estimated audience of 85 million.

Seven of the top eight most-watched programmes in U.S. Television history are Super Bowls.

**Green Bay welcome home champs**

Tens of thousands of Green Bay Packers fans gathered in the cold and snow Monday to mob the Super Bowl champs with a red-



**Green Bay Packers All-Pro defensive end Reggie White salutes fans during a rally at Lambeau Field in Green Bay, Wisconsin to welcome the Superbowl champions back home. The Packers defeated the New England Patriots 35-21, for their first NFL title since 1968 (Reuters photo)**

hot welcome home parade and rally.

"I feel like I'm in times square. It looks like New Year's Eve," a local radio reporter shouted above the din as the motorcade carrying the team pushed its way through crowds choking the downtown section of this town of 96,000.

The final destination for jubilant Packers players, who beat the New England Patriots 35-21 at New Orleans' Louisiana Superdome Sunday night for their first NFL championship in 29 years, was Lambeau Field.

About 60,000 fans paid \$5 each — some much higher to scalpers — to cram into the Packers' home stadium for a formal welcome ceremony. Those tickets were sold out within minutes of when they were offered last week.

A steady snow fell and temperatures hovered around 20 Fahrenheit (-7 c). Schools were closed. Some fans celebrated all night inside and then outside local bars, but police reported very few problems.

People crowded streets and climbed into trees along the motorcade route, forcing buses carrying the team to take a snail's pace. Confetti-making machines blew a paper blizzard from atop some buildings.

Nearly every car radio aerial in town seemed to have sprouted packers flags — selling for \$20 each — celebrating the team's triumph.

"There's no better place than the state of Wisconsin," said a former resident who said he got up before dawn from his home in Iowa to drive to Green Bay.

"It means the world," added another. "We've been waiting 30 years."

## West Ham have too many foreign players, says Bilic

**LONDON (R)** — Croatian international defender Slaven Bilic says West Ham United's Premier League position is "frightening" and thinks the club has too many foreign players.

West Ham sit third from the bottom following an uninspired performance last Monday which saw them lose 2-0 to goal-shy Leeds United in front of an increasingly angry home crowd.

On Saturday, things got even worse as the club suffered a humiliating home defeat, this time at the hands of Second Division giant-killers Wrexham, ending their English Football Association Cup (F.A.) hopes in a third round replay with a goal in the 90th minute.

Manager Harry Redknapp said afterwards he would resign if the chairman wanted him to. The board, traditionally supportive of its manager, has yet to make a decision.

The supporters, who had clearly lost patience with West Ham's appalling record — one win in 15 matches, and only one goal scored in the last five — flooded the pitch at the end of the game and United in a chorus of "sack the board".

Fans plan to distribute 15,000 red cards around the crowd at next Wednesday's game against title contenders Arsenal in a bid to reinforce their protest.

Redknapp has faced criticism as his controversial strategy of buying foreign players over local talent has yet to pay dividends.

At one point this season West Ham had 11 overseas players on their books, more than any other club in the country, with eight playing for the first team, but the influx has failed to bring success.

Portuguese striker Paolo Futre arrived last July only to quit in November with a knee injury while Romanian international Ilie Dumitrescu and Florin Raducioiu showed only brief flashes of form and failed to slot effectively into the club.

Bilic, 28, said of the two Romanians, "They didn't settle in... I don't know who is to blame." In a veiled criticism he added: "If you are

a good player you have to be capable of playing anywhere."

Dumitrescu has since been sold to Mexican club America Ciudad while Raducioiu — a star of the 1994 World Cup — has failed to hold down a first team place.

The failure of Redknapp's foreign gamble has left West Ham with a lame attacking force underlined by the fact that the club's top scorer with five goals this season is Julian Dicks, a defender.

West Ham have a strong tradition of fostering local talent from east London so Redknapp's strategy has proved controversial. Bilic said the change was due to budget limitations and the influence of big business in the game.

"We foreign players were cheaper and he thought us better," Bilic said. Redknapp has always argued that his limited budget went much further abroad.

Although Bilic supports the principle of bringing in players he considers "bigger stars," he said: "The nucleus should be from England and we should build with foreigners... My personal view is that there are too many of us."

Strangely enough, Saturday's game saw Redknapp revert to type, playing Frank Lampard and Rio Ferdinand, both local talents. They turned in good performances creating plenty of chances, albeit wasted ones.

To add to the fans' frustration, the club's board continues to deliberate on accepting an offer of eight million pounds (\$13 million) from multimillionaire investor Michael Tabor.

Bilic likened the state of English soccer to that of the Italian game 10 years ago when the lure of big money contracts and the prestige of playing in what was perceived as the world's best league resulted in a huge influx of foreign players.

He had this to say about English soccer today: "It is much quicker than Italian which is better tactically but the same technically. In England there is much less space, you have to move quickly."

Bilic, nicknamed "super Slav" by his teammates, arrived at Upton Park in January last year and has proved a great asset to the club.

His talents shone through last Monday's game when

he rattled the Leeds crossbar with a ferocious shot from just outside the area. While being a pillar of strength in defence, Bilic is prone to fruitful strikes into the opposing half and his height has made him a force to be reckoned with in the air.

"I have settled down really well," he said. "I am enjoying it very much."

Bilic, who is a law graduate, had wanted to come and play in London ever since he had visited while representing his home team Hadjuk Split against Tottenham in the 1991 UEFA Cup.

He said he had been welcomed by the fans, and added that the feeling was mutual.

"They are very passionate," he said, and added that he enjoyed the family atmosphere at the club, something he had not encountered in his European experience.

## Slaney at 38 looking to win at Millrose Games

**NEW YORK (R)** — Mary Decker Slaney hopes it will be like old times when America's best women's middle-distance runner competes at the Millrose Games next week for the first time since 1989.

"I want to come and do my very best and my very best in my mind is to run fast as well as win, and at this point my training is indicating that 'hey I can do this,' and I want to do this," Slaney said at a track writers' luncheon in a teleconference call Monday.

Slaney, 38, will run against a stellar group of milers at Madison Square Garden February 7 in a bid to add to her 1982, '83 and '85 titles at that distance in the famed indoor meet.

The assembled field features 1992 Olympic 1,500 metre champion Hassiba Boulmerka of Algeria, defending Millrose champion Kathy Franey and 1995 champion Angela Chalmers of Canada.

But Slaney, the holder of 10 U.S. indoor and outdoor records, including the indoor and outdoor mile marks, is feeling primed for all challengers after a series of strong road race wins in the last six weeks.

"I plan on going out and run my race, and at this point, everything that I have been doing indicates that I can run between 4:20 and 4:25 and if I have a really good night then I can run under 4:20," said Slaney, from her home in

Eugene, Oregon.

According to meet director Howard Schmertz, the last person to even break the four-minute, 30-second mark in the Millrose mile was Paula Iven of Romania in 1989 with a 4:23.72 clocking.

"The first thing you want to do in a race is win and I suppose at this point I'm being a little bit greedy because I want to win and run fast," said Slaney.

"Part of that is because it is Millrose and that I haven't been there for a long time and who knows when I will be back," she said.

Slaney has been hobbled by long list of leg and foot injuries and even asthma throughout her career, but recently has been running free of pain which has convinced her to return to the Millrose Games where she made a memorable debut as a California schoolgirl by winning the 1,000-yard race in 1974.

"Over the last few years when I have been hurt, injured, sick, I thought that if I ever got healthy enough that I could run at least one indoor race. It would be Millrose," Slaney said.

"I would not have come if I didn't feel like I would be in good shape and very, very, and very competitive," Slaney said.

"I couldn't be happier."

## SPORTS IN BRIEF

### PSG agree to super cup switch

**PARIS (AFP)** — Paris Saint Germain, the Cup Winners Cup holders, agreed on Monday to switch the second leg of their Super Cup tie with European Cup winners Juventus on February 5 to Palermo from Turin. Jean-Francois Domergue, PSG's managing director, said that Paris had agreed after Juventus voiced fears that because the Italian side were leading 6-1 from the first leg that nobody would turn up to the match — and they can count on good support from their supporters clubs in Sicily. The Italian side, who are awaiting permission from UEFA to switch the tie, also agreed to pay Paris compensation for the changing of the venue.

### Bailu offers to undergo alcohol counselling

**HARTFORD (AFP)** — Olympic ice-skating champion Oksana Bailu offered on Monday to undergo alcohol abuse counselling and perform community service to avoid trial on charges of drunk driving. Bailu, 19, and her two lawyers made the offer in a brief court appearance, one of the few times she has ventured into public view since a car accident a few kilometres from her home in nearby Simsbury January 12. The judge said he would announce his decision on February 5. Bailu, from Ukraine, is two years below the legal drinking age here. Her blood-alcohol level was .168, above the .10 minimum level for intoxication under state law. Her green Mercedes skidded and slid off the road and she was taken to a hospital in Hartford suffering from a concussion and needing a dozen stitches to a scalp wound.

### Dosedel comes in for Ulihrach

**PRAGUE (AFP)** — Slava Dosedel will replace Bohdan Ulihrach in the Czech Republic team for the World Group Davis Cup clash against India from February 7. Ulihrach, 21, refused to sign a contract for the match with the Czech Federation unless he was guaranteed to play in the singles. The Czechs will be captained by Vladislav Savrda and Dosedel joins Petr Korda, Jiri Novak and Martin Damm. The match will be played on an indoor clay-court at Pribam, about 50kms south-west of Prague.

### Sampras sets tour points record

**MONTE CARLO (R)** — American Pete Sampras set a record for the highest number of points in the world tennis rankings with 5,774 following his win at the Australian Open, the ATP Tour said Monday. The previous record was set by fellow American Andre Agassi with 5,652 points on August 28, 1995.

### S. Korean province to bid for winter Olympics

**MUJU, South Korea (AFP)** — South Korea's north Cholla province will bid to stage the 2006 winter Olympic Games in Muju and Chonju, its governor said Tuesday. "We believe we are a serious contender since we have world-class facilities for winter sports in ideally suited natural settings," Governor Ryu Jong-Geun said. He also highlighted the experience of Muju and Chonju in the southern province of staging international events. The World Student Winter Games are currently being held here. Because the province has just completed brand-new facilities for the University Games, the province will not have to make a substantial new investment for the Olympics, he said. He added that any Olympics held in Muju and Chonju would be profitable. In a separate move, the government approved a bid by the southern city of Taegu to stage the summer university games in 2001, on condition that the event only require minimum state funds. The host city for the 2001 summer Universiade will be decided in August at a meeting of international sports officials in Italy. Taegu will be bidding against two rivals from the United States and Taiwan.

## Hamed manager objects to American referee

**LONDON (AFP)** — A search for a neutral referee was underway on Tuesday after Naseem Hamed's camp objected to the choice for the world featherweight title unification fight with American Tom Johnson.

Brendan Ingle, manager of the flamboyant British WBO champion, is calling for New Jersey official Rudy Battle to be replaced for the February 8 clash — because he is an American.

"Brendan has asked for a neutral referee who is not from England, Europe or the United States," said fight promoter Frank Warren at Johnson's first pre-fight press conference.

"Battle is an excellent referee, but this will have to be resolved one way or another in the next few days."

IBF champion Johnson said: "I'm not one to object, although my handlers might."

"The point I would make is that if Hamed is saying he will beat me in two or three rounds, why make a big issue about the referee?"

Johnson dismissed an invitation from Hamed that the two fighters should agree to a winner-take-all instead of pocketing separate purses.

The American responded: "There are some things that are not worth an answer."

## BRITISH EMBASSY ANNUAL NOTICE TO ALL BRITISH CITIZENS LIVING IN JORDAN

Have you registered with the British Embassy? If you are a British citizen and live in Jordan, please contact the British Embassy, Consular Section, in order to obtain a registration form.

If you have registered during 1996, please confirm your continuing presence in Jordan by re-registering as soon as possible. Please also notify the Consular Section about any changes of address and/or telephone number. Such confirmation is in the interest of all British nationals in Jordan.

If names are not re-registered within three months the Embassy will be obliged to consider that those concerned have left the country. The names will accordingly be deleted from the register.

If you are a citizen of a Commonwealth country which does not have an Embassy or Consulate in Jordan, please ask the British Embassy, Consular Section, about registration formalities.

The British Embassy is located in Abdoun, near the Orthodox Club, Telephone 823100. The Post Office Box Number is 87.

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Once the UN has made a final determination on the disposition of its assets in Croatia and possibly in the UN Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, only companies registered as a result of this Request for Expression of Interest will be considered. Interested parties are requested to clearly express the area of their interest, i.e. direct sale or brokerage. In the case of brokers, they are requested to forward details of the services being offered along with the methodology they propose to adopt. All companies are also requested to forward their profile summary along with the latest annual financial statement. Deadline for submissions is set for: 7 February 1997, 16:00 New York Time. No submissions after the above deadline will be considered or accepted.

Please note that expression of your interest does not involve any commitment on the part of the UN. This Request does not constitute a contractual offer of any kind. Please fax or mail us your statement of interest with the exact address, phone and fax number at:

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# Baghdad sees April delivery of food under deal with U.N.

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraq's trade minister said Tuesday that food under the U.N.-approved "oil-for-food" programme will not be distributed until April, complaining bureaucratic U.N. procedures delayed the distribution.

The government had hoped to get extra rations of flour, rice, sugar and other commodities to the public in time for the feast next month that marks the end of the Ramadan.

Trade Minister Mohammad Mehdi Saleh blamed the United Nations oversight committee for the delay, saying it would not approve food contracts until money from the sale of Iraqi oil was in the bank. Pumping began Dec. 10.

That means the arrival of the first contract (of food) won't be until the end of February or beginning of March... and we can't distribute food for the people unless there is at least one commodity sufficient for the whole population," Mr. Saleh said in an interview with the Associated Press.

This means "the proper time would be April for distribution," he said. All of the country's 22 million people currently are eligible for monthly rations of cooking oil, flour, sugar, rice and tea that provide about one-third of the 3,000 calories health officials recommend for daily consumption.

When the U.N. programme is implemented, Mr. Saleh said, the quantity of flour, rice and sugar will be increased and lentils will be added to the package.

(Continued on page 7)

## Macarena dance linked to 'Satan worship' — author

CAIRO (AFP) — An Egyptian author claims to have discovered a link between the Macarena dance craze and Satanic rites performed by alleged devil worshippers here.

Author Sayed Mahruss made the claim Tuesday as Pope Shenouda III, head of the Coptic Church in Egypt, urged the authorities to impose the "stiffest" possible sanctions against dozens of youths under investigation for alleged "Satan worship."

Mr. Mahruss told the opposition Al Wafd newspaper that he had made the link to the Macarena during research for his recently published book on Satan worship.

"During my research for the book I went to many discos, and I noticed that each time they played the Macarena columns of smoke filled the discos and that the movements of the dance were part of satanic rites," he said.

"I asked a boy and a girl about these movements, and they told me they were Satan-worshipping rites," he said.

Mr. Mahruss also claimed that "Satan worshipping" first emerged in Egypt after

the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty in 1979 and Cairo's opening to the West.

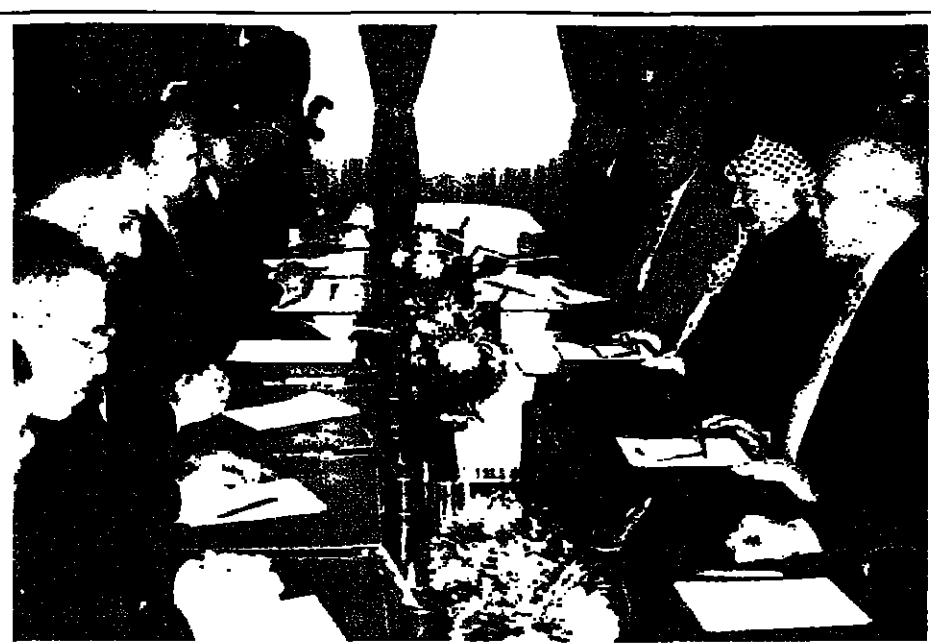
At that time, he said, many youths were invited to Israel by "Zionist organisations as part of efforts to maintain Egyptian-Israeli friendship bonds."

"The young people returned from Israel with strange ideas and ways of dressing," he said.

Al Wafd also quoted Pope Shenouda III as calling for "the stiffest possible sanctions against Satan worshippers" and saying that "atheism is the result of all sorts of corruption and alienations throughout history."

On Monday, Egypt's mufti, Sheikh Nasr Farid Wassel, urged "Satan worshippers" to repent and said that otherwise, under Islamic law, they could be sentenced to death.

Last week the Egyptian authorities dismantled a sect which urged "Satan worshipping" and the veneration of Satan," police said. Police rounded up 76 youths aged between 17 and 20 and were still looking for 19 others, including the daughter of an Egyptian actress.



JORDANIAN-PALESTINIAN TALKS: His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat on Tuesday chair Jordanian-Palestinian talks on the Middle East peace process and bilateral relations in Amman (photo by Yousef Allan)

## Shooting erupts as Lima police parade past hostage compound

LIMA (AFP) — Gunfire rang out around the Japanese ambassador's residence as police put on a show of force around the mansion where rebels are holed up with 72 hostages, raising concern among Japanese authorities.

The military parade that sparked the shooting came despite a call from Tokyo for Peru's police to end provocations around the Japanese embassy mansion where 52 Peruvians, 19 Japanese and one Bolivian are held hostage.

A short burst of gunfire was heard as dozens of troops circled the compound on Monday after Peruvian police in an armoured vehicle made obscene gestures, taunting the rebels inside. Tokyo again called for calm after this latest incident.

Implicitly voicing displeasure, Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto made the request to Peru's President Alberto Fujimori in a telephone conversation, government officials said.

"We understand the need to tighten security around the compound, but we would like you to give full consideration so that police action... do not bring about any unexpected situations," Mr. Hashimoto was quoted as telling Mr. Fujimori.

The scene was calm if noisy early Tuesday as huge speakers placed just outside the embassy compound resounded with military music for 30 minutes

from 6:00 a.m. (1100 GMT). The guerrillas reacted by blasting rebel songs in the other direction over loudspeakers.

"I'm worried whether irritation among the terrorists would intensify due to moves by the special police unit," Mr. Hashimoto told reporters Tuesday. "I'm calling (the Peruvian government's) attention to such moves." On Monday afternoon, as military music blared, one tank, three armoured troop carriers, a pickup and about 100 heavily armed police from a special operations unit marched around the compound for about two hours.

Martial music poured from speakers piled three metres high that had been installed around the white walled compound around midday.

Two rebels could be seen watching from a window of the home. One rebel in a second floor window flashed two fingers in a "V" for victory.

But midway through the parade, a short burst of gunfire rang out as police in an armoured troop carrier waved obscene gestures at the rebels.

Other heavily armed police, wearing bulletproof vests, threw themselves on the ground or crouched in a firing position.

Police showed reporters the rear door of one troop carrier that was pocked with three bullet marks, but it was not immediately clear if they resulted from

the shooting.

"Everybody should calm down and let the desire for peace prevail," the Peruvian bishops' conference said in a statement after the incident.

The leftist rebels are demanding the release of some 440 jailed rebels in exchange for the hostages. Talks have stalled since the government has refused to discuss any prisoner release.

Mr. Fujimori's point man on the hostage crisis, Education Minister Domingo Palerm, announced shortly after the gunfire that a locale had been found for talks between the government and rebels holed up in the compound.

He said that an armoured vehicle had been found to transport guerrillas to the talks. There was no immediate word as to whether it was acceptable to the rebels.

Despite Tokyo's implicit criticism, Japan's Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda noted that the Peruvian government was making progress towards setting up a negotiating commission for the direct talks.

"I see steady progress towards creating the commission... I hope the MRTA rebels will make a positive response," he told a press conference in Tokyo. Even before this latest incident, Tokyo was worried about violence around the compound.

## Israeli soldiers under orders not to shoot at Jew shooting at Arabs

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israeli troops in Hebron are under orders never to open fire on Jewish civilians, even if they see them shooting at Arabs, an Israeli human rights group said Tuesday.

The Betsalem group said it learned about the open-fire orders from a sergeant in the army reserves, a lawyer by profession, who was among the Israeli troops in Hebron being briefed by the commander of the region, "Colonel Gadi."

The open-fire orders first came to light in 1994, after a Jewish settler, Baruch Goldstein, shot and killed at least 30 Muslim worshippers in the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron.

An officer in the paramilitary border police told a commission of inquiry into the mosque massacre that he could not have stopped Mr. Goldstein even if he had been present during the attack because standing orders barred troops from shooting at Israeli civilians.

The army later said the orders had been corrected, but Betsalem said Tuesday the latest evidence suggest-

ed no changes were made.

The latest shooting incident in Hebron occurred on New Year's Day when an off-duty soldier, Noam Friedman, opened fire on Palestinian shoppers, wounding five. Friedman stood just a few metres away from an Israeli army post, and emptied an ammunition clip before he was jumped and overpowered by an Israeli soldier.

Betsalem noted that if an Arab fires on a Jew in Hebron, Israeli soldiers have orders to shoot without hesitation. The group urged the army's judge advocate general, Uri Shoham, to change the open fire orders and investigate "Colonel Gadi."

"Troops cannot be given the impression that the life of a Jew is more than that of the people he is shooting at," Betsalem wrote in a letter to Brigadier General Shoham.

Ahmad Tibi, an adviser to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, said the open-fire orders are "immoral, racist and dangerous."

## 'Abu Marzouk drops bid against U.S. extradition'

TEL AVIV (AP) — A Hamas leader jailed in the United States has decided to drop his fight against extradition to Israel where he faces murder and conspiracy charges, an Israeli daily said Tuesday.

The Yediot Achronot daily said Musa Mohammad Abu Marzouk, a 45-year-old Palestinian, is expected to be extradited within two months to Israel which has accused him of financing and planning attacks against Israelis.

Hamas is a militant group opposed to the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace agreements. Dr. Abu Marzouk has said he was a leader of Hamas' political wing, and has denied any control over terrorist actions.

Yediot said U.S. prosecutors have informed Israeli officials of Dr. Abu Marzouk's decision to stop fighting his extradition.

Israeli officials had assumed Dr. Abu Marzouk would try to drag out legal proceedings in the United States as much as possible to avoid extradition, and were surprised by his decision, Yediot said.

Yigal Palmot, a spokesman of Israel's foreign ministry, said he was not aware of any information from the United States reaching Israel that Dr. Abu Marzouk would be extradited soon.

An Abu Marzouk trial in Israel could cause new complications in the peace talks between the Palestinians and Israel's hardline government.

Hamas has threatened to carry out new suicide attacks if Dr. Abu Marzouk stands trial in the Jewish state.

The Palestinian National Authority demanded that Dr. Abu Marzouk be extradited to areas under its control. Hanan Ashrawi, a member of the Palestinian cabinet, said Tuesday she recently received a call from Dr. Abu Marzouk's wife.

"She (the wife) told me she was hoping that he could be extradited back to Palestine. I told her I would try to help in the issue," said Ms. Ashrawi, adding that she did not know whether Dr. Abu Marzouk had decided to drop his fight against extradition.

Khaled Kidreh, the Palestinian attorney general, said Tuesday that Dr. Abu Marzouk "has not given up his fight for extradition to Israel."

Mr. Kidreh said Dr. Abu Marzouk was willing to leave the United States "on condition that he comes to the Palestinian territories."

Mr. Kidreh said the PNA would do everything it could to bring Dr. Abu Marzouk to the autonomous Palestinian areas, but had not decided whether he would be put on trial in a Palestinian court.

Hamas is the PNA's most serious political rival, but in recent weeks the two have

(Continued on page 7)

## 'El Al plane that crashed in 1992 carried missiles'

TEL AVIV (AFP) — An Israeli cargo plane which crashed into an Amsterdam housing block in 1992, killing about 70 people, was carrying missiles and uranium, the Israeli newspaper Yediot Achronot reported on Tuesday.

The newspaper said the Boeing 747-200 cargo aircraft belonging to the state airline El Al had military spare parts and several sidewinder air-to-air missiles in its hold at the time of the accident.

The newspaper said the presence of the arms on board caused a powerful explosion on impact and helped explain the extent of damage caused to the high-rise housing compound which was occupied mainly by immigrants.

A spokesman for El Al confirmed that the plane was carrying "military spare parts" but categorically denied that any missiles or explosive materials were in the consignment.

"These military parts presented no danger of explosion," Nachman Kleinman told AFP.

Mr. Kleinman also denied Yediot allegations the plane was carrying 400 to 600 kilograms of radioactive uranium which could have caused reported cases of birth defects and cancer among persons living near the crash site.

"Depleted uranium is used to provide balance in the wings of virtually all aircraft built in the world," he said. "The several hundred kilograms of this non-radioactive material were in the wings of our Boeing 747."

The spokesman recalled that an official investigation into the crash had found "that the Boeing company was entirely responsible for the accident due to a serious defect in the engine-support system."

## COLUMN

Workers facing layoffs win \$46 million.

JACKSON, Michigan (R) — A group of Michigan factory workers who were preparing for impending layoffs reported to work as usual on Monday, even after a lottery ticket they bought won a \$46 million jackpot on Friday.

Shirley Johnson said she and her 16 previously unlucky co-workers would continue "to work until we get our pink slip." Kellogg Industries Co., a surgical and orthopaedic supplies plant in Jackson, Michigan, that was scheduled to close in June, notified its 85 workers last November that it would close the 90-year-old factory and transfer production to a newer plant in California. Two weeks ago, some of the workers formed a lottery club and bought 19 tickets for Friday's "big game" multi-state lottery.

Menem wants powerboat champion in congress

BUENOS AIRES (R) — Argentine President Carlos Menem said he was proposing world powerboat champion Daniel Scioi to stand for congress for the ruling Peronist Party in mid-term elections in October. Menem described Scioi as "a sportsman who has triumphed at home and abroad and made the Argentine flag fly proudly."

The 39-year-old Argentine has won six world titles in 11 years' racing, despite having to compete with one false arm since 1989, when he lost his right arm in a race. Menem said the party was free to accept or not his choice to head the list of candidates for the chamber of deputies for Buenos Aires.

Arabia protests over detention in Iran

RIYADH (AP) — Saudi Arabia's foreign ministry said Wednesday it had lodged a protest with Iran over the detention of a Saudi citizen without trial.

A Saudi citizen, named as a Saudi national, was detained in Iran in 1994. Saudi Arabia has since been demanding his release.

They said the man had been detained in Iran in 1994. Saudi Arabia has since been demanding his release.

Royal yacht plan too taxing for Britons

LONDON (R) — Britons oppose by a margin of three to one the government's plan to fund a new royal yacht from taxpayers' money, according to an opinion poll. An ICM poll in the Guardian newspaper asked people if they approved or disapproved of the government's decision to spend 60 million sterling (\$100 million) of public money on a replacement for the present royal yacht, Britannia. In reply, 72 per cent said they disapproved, with only 24 per cent approving.

Britannia is on its last voyage before being taken out of service after 44 years.

Conservatives plan to privatise U.K. taxmen

LONDON (R) — Britain's ruling Conservatives are drawing up plans for the privatisation of the tax-raising Inland Revenue, the Guardian newspaper said. The Guardian said the plan, which would involve the sale of 450 tax offices and the introduction of private contractors to assess tax returns, was being prepared for the Conservative election manifesto. Prime Minister John Major wants to hold the election on May 1.

The privatisation is aimed at raising 250 million sterling (\$402 million) a year, the paper said. The Guardian said the plan would mean job losses at the Inland Revenue, which employs 60,000 people.

Dog robbed

SALINE, Michigan (AP) — Customers at Harry's service station delighted in tipping Charlie, a 7-year-old golden retriever trained to take bills and deliver change. But someone broke in recently and raided an estimated \$80 to \$100 in a jar set aside for Charlie's tips. "Nothing else was taken," manager Rick Parsons said last week. "Probably some kids." Parsons' father, Harry, said Charlie has been a public relations windfall and a paw print even appears on credit card receipts. "When someone gives you a \$20 bill for their gas, they're generally pleasant," he said. "But when they give it to Charlie, they're downright happy."

Turkish ships leave northern Cyprus

WVA (AP) — Three Turkish ships left northern Cyprus on Wednesday after a Cypriot court ruled that they were in violation of a 1994 court order that banned foreign ships from the island.

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## U.S. sees 'struggles to

WASHINGTON (R) — The White House said Tuesday it was concerned that Iraq's oil-for-food programme might be abused by corrupt officials. The statement came as the U.N. programme began distributing food to Iraqis.

Volume 22 Number 64

Israeli jets raid Hizbollah stronghold

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israeli jets struck a Hizbollah stronghold in southern Lebanon on Tuesday, killing at least 10 people and wounding 20 others, Israeli officials said.

The jets targeted a Hizbollah training camp in the area. Israeli officials said the camp was used for training and launching attacks against Israel.

The attack was part of a series of operations by the Israeli Air Force against Hizbollah targets in Lebanon.

Israeli jets also struck a Hizbollah training camp in southern Lebanon on Tuesday, killing at least 10 people and wounding 20 others, Israeli officials said.

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